


The New Balkans

By HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG



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ERRATA

Page 21, second line from the bottom, for "are" read "will be"

Page 150, line 16, for "1920" read "1924"

Page 163, line 15, for "has" read "had"





THE NEW BALKANS



THE BALKAN PENINSULA TO-DAY

THE NEW BALKANS

BY

HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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WITH MAPS



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THE NEW BALKANS

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To
EDWIN F. GAY

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MAPS

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INTRODUCTION

THE PEOPLES OF THE PENINSULA

BY ARCHIBALD CARY COOLIDGE

THREE great peninsulas jut out to the southward from Europe into the Mediterranean. Two of them, Spain in the west and Italy in the center, are marked off from the rest of the continent by well-defined mountain ranges, and though both have been fought over again and again and have been under foreign rule or split up among small states, nevertheless the peoples in each have sooner or later expelled or absorbed the invader and achieved a national culture. In the case of Italy there is practically complete linguistic and to-day political unity. In the Spanish peninsula destiny has apparently decided that there shall be two states, Portugal and Spain, whose dialects have grown into separate languages, while a third one has been developed in Catalonia, but all three of these languages are of Latin origin and are

closely akin. The peoples speaking them, whether united or hostile, have always had much in common.

In the third great peninsula, that of the Balkans, there is no such separation from the outside world and no such unity within. The word "Balkan" itself is not an ancient term, but a Turkish word meaning mountain, which has replaced the classical name, the Hæmus, for the central chain, and has grown to be the designation for a whole vaguely defined territory. In the past the lower Danube has sometimes served as part of its frontier—for instance, during most of the period of the Roman Empire—but modern Rumania has usually been regarded as a Balkan state, even if the Rumanians have resented this. To the northwest the boundary has been even more variable and it is difficult to say what is the natural one. If we call enlarged Rumania and the new Yugoslavia with all their territories Balkan states, the peninsula—politically speaking—has never been so large as it is at the present day, when it extends to the Dniester and includes parts of some of the oldest Austrian provinces.

But large or small, the Balkan peninsula has ever been inhabited by discordant peoples whose interests and ambitions have clashed fiercely with one another. Sometimes they have been held down by one firm hand, that of imperial Rome or of the Ottoman Em-

pire in its great days. But there have always been embers under the ashes, there have always been outsiders ready to make trouble if they got a chance, and unfortunately this is still true to-day. For more than a thousand years after the Visigoths crossed the Danube until the Turks firmly planted their power on its banks in the fifteenth century, there was incessant contest between warring peoples. The Germans soon drew off to the west, but were succeeded by the Slavs, who remained, though their short-lived empires rose and fell in a few generations. Turanian nomads swept down from the plains, Huns, Avars, Bulgars, and others, but only the Bulgars took root, and these were so completely absorbed by the Slav population that the nation to whom they have given their name speaks a language which shows hardly a trace of that of the early conquerors. The enemy and prey of all these barbarians, the Byzantine Empire, which, though still calling itself Roman, soon became Greek, had its periods of glory and civilization and spread its culture and faith not only among the Slavs who had come into its territories, but among their kindred in distant Russia. But in the days when it declined, it was attacked from all sides and, though in spite of its decay it resisted with wonderful pertinacity, it succumbed at last to its many foes. These foes included peoples who after disappearing

from the scene were to come back again ages later. Thus in the eleventh century Russian warriors conquered Bulgaria and Russian fleets threatened the Bosphorus, and at the beginning of the thirteenth, Frenchmen and Italians, in the so-called fourth crusade, stormed Constantinople.

Finally the coming of the Ottoman Turks put an end to all this and led to the creation of a new and mighty empire. For some three centuries the Balkan peninsula rarely saw an enemy on its own soil, but served as a basis for expeditions and further conquests. When, however, the Ottoman state decayed in its turn, when it staggered under the blows of the enemies to whom it yielded ground, while misgovernment and corruption weakened its fibers, the peoples whom the Turks had subdued but not assimilated reawakened to a new consciousness and one after another strove for their liberty, till, with or without aid from outside, they ended by achieving it. Greece and Serbia through much bloodshed attained their independence early in the nineteenth century. The Rumanian principalities, which had never been Turkish provinces, but vassal states, managed to unite peacefully in 1859, though their complete independence, like that of Serbia, did not come till the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78. This also brought partial freedom to the Bulgarians; the revolution of

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Philipopolis in 1885 gave them political union. The two Balkan Wars and the World War, after many temporary changes of frontier, led to the present settlement, which has confirmed and aggravated the results of the Bulgarian defeat of 1913 and has vastly increased the strength and importance of Rumania and Serbia, not only as Balkan but as European states, by allotting to them the lands inhabited by those of their nationality formerly under Russian or Austro-Hungarian rule.

That the new arrangements are not to the liking of everybody is in the nature of things. That they should seem to many to contain grievous injustices is also not surprising. It was not the superiority of the Serbian and Greek claims, but the stern arbitrament of war, that decided the fate of Macedonia and Thrace. Many of the new boundaries are not well based on either geographical or ethnical considerations, and it will be long before they are universally accepted as right or final. But it would be a mistake to regard them in most cases as mere halting places on the way to ultimate union. The various Balkan populations, though of more mixed blood than they are willing to admit, represent peoples of widely diverse origin and traditions who have fought against one another in ages past, and they are animated to-day by a spirit of intense nationalism. Each is proud of

its own glory, jealous of its own independence, filled with its own ambitions. Even loose federation looks improbable in any near future.

Albania, the weakest of the Balkan countries, with an area not far from that of Switzerland and a population of less than a million, represents the earliest inhabitants of the peninsula in historical times. As descendants of the Illyrians or the Pelasgi or the like, the Albanians regard themselves as the original occupants of the soil, who have been wrongfully dispossessed by later comers. Among their national heroes they claim Alexander the Great. But warlike as they have shown themselves in the past, and rude as is the character of their territory, their independence is chiefly due to the jealousies of their neighbors. Were it not for the Italians, Serbia and Greece, both of whom have old grievances against the Albanians, would cheerfully divide the region between them. Italy, to be sure, has had her own ambitions, and at one moment bade fair to carry them out, but in 1920 in a moment of pacifism she withdrew her troops from the port of Valona, which she had occupied during the war. Many Italians have regretted this weakness since.

Whether and to what extent the modern Greeks are descendants of the ancient Hellenes is of small consequence. The fact that they believe themselves to

be matters much, for it is at the base of their national psychology. They are convinced that they belong to the premier race of all history, the one that has contributed most gloriously to the civilization of the world. If, compared with them, even the Romans were barbarians and imitators, what must be their contempt for such crude late comers as the Slavs! This national pride or rather faith, for it is no less, leads to the excessive vanity for which the Greeks have had a reputation, but it also gives them a certain resilience, a tenacity founded on a conviction of innate superiority which must ultimately triumph. A trait of this kind is of inestimable value for a people who have had so many ups and downs in their destinies.

True to their past, the Greeks are to-day a people of sailors and traders rather than agriculturists. As always, they live on or not far from the sea coast, but they have just suffered one of the most appalling calamities in their annals, one that is probably irretrievable. They have been expelled from Asia Minor, whose shores for some three thousand years have been their home as much as has Greece itself, and the birthplace of many of their most illustrious men from perhaps Homer down. Their flourishing settlements in the western Mediterranean were absorbed many centuries ago by Latin rule, but till the other day the

Greeks held on to their ancient home in Asia under the Turk as they had under the Persian and the Roman. The twelve hundred thousand exiles who after terrible hardships have now taken refuge in Greece proper have strained to the utmost the capacity of the land which has received them, but at least they have given a predominantly Hellenic character to southern Macedonia and to western Thrace, a valuable and timely achievement in view of the present craving for expansion to the sea on the part of both Serbs and Bulgarians who have no historical rights to the northern coast of the Ægean, but obvious economic reasons for desiring to plant themselves there.

The descent of the modern Rumans from Roman colonists brought in by Trajan is even more dubious than that of the compatriots of Venizelos from those of Pericles. But whatever the blood of the population of Rumania may be, there is no gainsaying that their language is fundamentally a Latin one. Here again the important thing is the faith of the people themselves, the sentiment that they belong to one of the branches of the human race which has contributed the most to the civilization of mankind; they are heirs to the Roman, they are kin to the French, the Italians, the Spanish, not to barbarous Slavs. Even in the days when their political and economic relations with Germany were closest, their cultural Mecca was Paris,

not Berlin. Such considerations have a practical importance which should not be underrated. In the World War the feeling that the French and Italians were fellow Latins assured them Rumanian sympathies as against the Germans, and was an element in determining which side Rumania should take. Between French and Italians, the Rumanians are free to choose. Until very recently their relations have been far closer with the French, who reorganized their army after its disasters and who have been on intimate terms with them since, encouraging their participation in the Little Entente and their alliance with Poland. But if Mussolini has more to offer in the future, it will not be difficult for Bucharest to turn its gaze from Paris to Rome.

During the World War, Rumania suffered severely, but no state has seen its wildest dreams more completely fulfilled in the end. Contrary to what anyone could have expected, she got from both the mighty empires that had been her neighbors everything (except a portion of the Banat) which each had offered her at the expense of the other. This rare good fortune, however, has had the drawback that present-day enlarged Rumania includes a formidable percentage of non-Rumanian elements and a still larger one of discontented citizens, for even among the Rumans in Transylvania and Bessarabia there are

many who feel they have only changed masters. This dissatisfaction is rendered the more dangerous by the fact that the Soviet government has repeatedly and flatly refused to recognize as legitimate the Rumanian occupation of Bessarabia, nor have the Rumanians dared to risk the plebiscite demanded by Moscow. Their moral position is further impaired by their ill success in governing their new territory and conciliating its inhabitants. Under such circumstances the menacing attitude of Moscow constitutes a grave peril.

The two Slav states of the Balkans, Serbia and Bulgaria, are kept apart by a rivalry, not to say a hatred, which goes back to their remote past and has been embittered by recent strife and alternate conquest. In the heyday of the early Bulgarian Empire the Serbs were subject to it, till they freed themselves by successful revolt as they likewise did from Byzantine rule. Almost exactly five hundred years ago they defeated the Bulgars in a decisive battle which was the first step in their own short-lived period of empire; a few generations later both peoples were conquered by the Turks. The Serbs won their independence first, but as soon as the Bulgars obtained theirs there was trouble between the two. The peace of San Stefano gave territory to Serbia which the Congress of Berlin later assigned to Bulgaria. In 1885 Serbia attacked Bulgaria without provocation

and was badly beaten. The two fought on the same side in the First Balkan War, yet before peace was signed they had quarreled over the spoils, and as a result of the second one, Bulgaria, the defeated party, lost most of her gains. She got them back and more for a time during the World War when the whole of Serbia was overrun and much of it held down by Bulgarian troops, but the conflict ended in the triumph of the Serbs, who joined to themselves Croats and Slovenes to form the new Yugoslav state, while Bulgaria, beaten and helpless, condemned to pay reparations and forbidden to keep anything more than a miniature army, has not only been put out of Macedonia altogether, but has lost her Ægean seaboard.

Yet all is not well with Serbia. The kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes is composed of three elements who in spite of their proximity and the similarity of their speech have never in the past formed parts of the same state. The jealousies between them are keen and the question of the permanence of their union is still far from being settled. There can be little doubt that the Italians, however nominally friendly at this moment, would welcome and are not unlikely to promote a disruption if they get a chance. Powerless, too, as is Bulgaria to drive the Serbs out of Macedonia, she is not yet reconciled to this loss; in fact, she cannot be expected to be in view of the

great number of Macedonians who have fled across her borders and who refuse to accept the situation as final and who plan and agitate to stir up trouble.

The remedy for this and for the whole intolerable relation between Serbia and Bulgaria is so obvious that it has many partisans in both camps, though, like many obvious things, it is not easy to achieve. Granted that Serbs and Bulgars have centuries of mutual enmity to look back upon, and that there are many differences between them, when all is said and done they are kindred nationalities separated by no natural geographic frontiers and speaking languages so close to each other that it is hard to say to which of them the intermediary dialects belong. The very difficulty of determining whether the Macedonian Slavs are or ought to be Serbs or Bulgars or something between the two is a proof of this. The kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes might well have the Bulgars added to it as a fourth element—they are indeed already closer in most ways to the Serbs than are the Roman Catholic Slovenes with their centuries of Germanic history and influence and their Latin alphabet. It is a contradiction of terms to exclude the most southern of the Slavs from any Jugo (*i.e.*, Southern) Slav state. If once they were admitted, the whole constitution might well be made more federal in character, thereby enabling Monte-

negro to regain a part of her lost historic individuality, to which many Montenegrins are still attached, and Slavic Macedonia to be given an autonomy which would satisfy its inhabitants and put an end to the baleful competition for its possession.

Yet desirable from many points of view as such a solution would be, it would have to encounter grave objections both internal and external. To name only the chief ones, for Bulgaria it would mean the sacrifice of her present theoretically complete independence and also probably of her separate royal dynasty. There could hardly be a king at Sofia as well as at Belgrade. For the Serbs it would entail a painful weakening of their hegemony in the Yugoslav state, and it is favored on that account by many Croats and Slovenes, who chafe at Serbian control under the present centralized system. The chances are, too, that an autonomous Macedonia would in the future be Bulgarian rather than Serbian.

Formidable opposition also might be encountered from without. A Yugoslav state that included Bulgaria would have a population of some 17,000,000; it would equal that of Rumania and more than double that of Greece, which would be highly unwelcome to both of them, for it would add Serbian strength to Bulgarian aspirations. Thus it would inherit the Bulgarian claims to the Dobrudja and, stretching from

the Black Sea to the Adriatic, it would be more clamorous than ever for an outlet on the Ægean and, combining Serbian and Bulgarian desires for the possession of Saloniki, it might subject Greece to fearful pressure. This new Jugoslavia would likewise be regarded by the Turks as a menace to their possession of Constantinople, and by the Italians as a rival threatening their supremacy in the Adriatic, the last thing they are disposed to put up with. All this, however, need not prevent friends of the Southern Slavs from believing that a federal union would be the best and wisest solution for their difficulties with one another.

The Turks, the latest comers in the Balkan peninsula, once the proud rulers of the whole, now, if we count only their European territory, form the smallest of the Balkan states, though they still retain, as did the Greeks before them, the imperial city as a last possession. In their ultra nationalism they have expelled all of the Christian subjects they were allowed to by treaty and are making life difficult for those, like the Greeks in Constantinople, whom they are theoretically bound to tolerate. The future of Constantinople itself looks gloomy enough. It is no longer a capital; indeed, the rulers at Angora view it with disfavor; nor is it a center of any particular trade or industry. Past glories alone will not prevent

it from subsiding into the position of a provincial town. Far from being the starting point for a new Turkish advance into Europe, its importance is more likely to come from the fact that it is coveted by its neighbors, Greece, Bulgaria (or Jugoslavia), not to speak of Soviet Russia. To these it might have a higher value than it has to its present possessors.

Albanians, Greeks, Rumans, Slavs, Turks, are emerging from a period of immense changes and are entering into a new national life. Besides the adjustments they must make with one another, they have those with the outside world, for the Balkan peninsula has not yet reached the freedom of the Italian and Spanish ones from likelihood of interference on the part of the Great Powers. France and England may have withdrawn from the arena, but they are interested in the future of the Straits, and we may doubt whether Russia, Soviet or not, has said her last word in that question. Toward Rumania her attitude is ominous of trouble. On the other side of the peninsula, separated from it by only a narrow stretch of sea, lies Italy, the power which is more suspected than any other to-day of entertaining imperialistic ambitions. The eternal "Eastern Question"—the immediate cause of the World War—is still with us. In the multiplicity of the issues it raises, it is still one of the serious perils to the peace of mankind. Yet granting

all these dangers, we may believe that the fate of the Balkan people is first and foremost in their own hands and depends on the wisdom with which they make use of their new-found liberties and opportunities.

CHAPTER I

THE NEW BALKANS

EVEN from the mere physical point of view the Balkan states are far from insignificant. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, known better perhaps as Yugoslavia, has an area of 96,134 square miles and over 12,000,000 inhabitants. Rumania is even larger; its area, including the former Russian province of Bessarabia, is 122,282 square miles—that is, some 10,000 square miles larger than Italy—and its population is over 17,000,000. Bulgaria, as a result of the Treaty of Neuilly, finds her territory reduced to 39,824 square miles and her population to something less than 5,000,000. Greece to-day has a total area of about 49,000 square miles and a population, counting recent refugees from Asia Minor, of a good deal more than 6,000,000. Albania, the smallest and most backward of the Balkan states, covers an area estimated at 17,000 square miles and has a population of about 830,000. In all, then, the states of the Balkan peninsula contain over 40,000,000 souls and cover over 320,000 square miles.

No attempt is made in the pages that follow to describe these states separately, to recall all their past, or to speak *ex cathedra* on the course which History must follow if, as some historians have the habit of implying when they talk of the future, she is to deserve the good opinion of the author. This little book represents merely an effort to set down the main elements of a few of the special problems which are troubling, or may at any time trouble, the Balkan peninsula, as they have appeared to the writer in the course of yearly journeys there since the end of 1918. The excuse for an American's undertaking such a task is that Balkan problems have been fruitful causes for intrigue and war in spheres far removed from the Danube and the Save, the Vardar and the Maritza. The Great War, from which the harvest hands of Iowa and the bargees of Louisiana did not find themselves exempt, began in the Balkans with a political assassination growing out of a nationalistic struggle of the sort which has many parallels in central Europe and the Balkans to-day.

The spirit in which the present volume has been undertaken is not at all that of an eminent American historian who just on the eve of the war had the ill luck to publish a sarcastic book on what he considered the futile and fantastic aspirations of the Balkan peoples for liberty and self-government, and who saw

his laborious pages swept promptly off into the discard of false prophecy. It may be recalled—for a reason which will appear in a moment, and not merely in order to laugh at the author in question—that a year or so after the armistice he decided to reissue his book from the original plates. As the former Balkan protagonists had changed, he found it necessary here and there to delete a proper name; but by choosing new ones of just the same length, and having them carefully mortised into the cavities in the original plates, he was able to save his publishers considerable expense in bringing out the new edition. In justice to our historian—and here appears the reason for alluding to him at all—it must be said that his idea was excellent even if his faulty execution (probably owing to technical difficulties) resulted in the confusion of his readers. The main elements of many of the old Balkan riddles do in fact remain, though often with new names and faces and playing new parts. Some were solved by the war. But in the place of those have sprung up fresh problems, not usually so threatening, it is true, but demanding care and watching.

All this may seem to belie our optimistic title. What, it will be asked, is New? The Turks are gone, or nearly gone, from the Balkan horizon. Russia will continue to exercise an influence on the Slavic peoples

of eastern Europe, but the rôle of the Third International and of its eventual legatees, however active, will certainly be different from that of the line of Russian statesmen from Gortchakov to Isvolsky and Hartweg. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy has disappeared into the maze of secret passages and ferret holes that underlay it. In the place of the Ottoman and Hapsburg Empires stand vigorous national states, some of them more prosperous and consolidated than others, but all of them with frontiers corresponding fairly well to ethnic actualities (in any event far more closely than did pre-war frontiers), and all with ideas and objectives of their own and new powers of independent action. Some of them have at times trusted themselves to leaders who placed the interests of a particular faction or class above the interests of the country at large, but it may fairly be said that the men who since the war have ruled the destinies of the new or transformed Balkan states have been neither more nor less scrupulous than their colleagues in western Europe.

Optimistic statements about the Balkans, even in ephemeral modern print, have often been regretted; but as these words are written, midway in the eighth year since the armistice, there seems ground for moderate optimism.

Jugoslavia has continued to follow a careful finan-

cial policy, and has successfully funded her debt toward the United States. Though the Croat peasant leader, Stefan Raditch, is still as irresponsible as ever, he no longer uses the language of revolution and separatism. Charges of inefficiency and the toleration of corruption are being made and accepted by all the Yugoslav political parties with disconcerting levity, and it is evident that the end of the era of recurring political crises is not yet. But the state is unified, the Crown is in steady hands, and the heat of party conflict touches neither.

Albania has for the second year escaped its "annual revolution," and Ahmed Bey Zogu, though probably feeling that he has been forced to give too privileged a place to Italy in the development of his country's just-awakening economic life, still seems to have a firm hold on the Presidency and entire control of Parliament.

Greece, strengthened by the successful absorption of the naturally industrious Greek population of Asia Minor, found in General Pangalos an interpreter of the will to national regeneration after the defeats at the hands of the Turks and the disintegrating Venizelist-Royalist feuds of the past years. Greece still faces serious difficulties, internal and external, and her rulers are wise to resist alike threats and promises of rewards which are designed to make their

country a tool in new conflicts and to distract the national attention from its great task of economic and political consolidation. The settlement of the Mosul dispute between Turkey and Great Britain will have a soothing effect in the eastern Mediterranean, and will tend to discourage adventurous Greeks who had hoped by joining powerful allies in new conflicts against Turkey to regain some of what has been lost in Thrace and Anatolia.

Friends of Rumania who long to see the nation consolidated, socially from Crown to peasant, geographically from the Carpathians to the Dniester, were not altogether happy over the decision to intrust the direction of the recent elections to General Averescu. In Rumania the party that makes the elections wins the elections. General Averescu is not credited with being a particularly efficient administrator (Rumania's greatest need to-day is efficient and honest administration), and is generally regarded as a place-warmer for ex-Premier Bratianu. It would be disappointing if the Crown's rebuff to the National and Peasant parties forced the new provinces into a political opposition based on purely regional grounds. Rumania, marching on the east with Russia, and possessing in Bessarabia a rich province which, though more Rumanian than Russian in blood, has had close commercial ties with Odessa, cannot

afford sharp internal divisions and bad administration. However, General Averescu may develop organizing abilities and powers of conciliation hitherto unsuspected by his critics.

Bulgaria is the most obscure spot in the picture. M. Liaptcheff started his government off well by mollifying political opponents and curbing super-patriots. As a result he seemed to have coaxed Jugoslavia into admitting his sincerity of purpose, a quality denied Bulgarian governments by all the neighboring states ever since the fall of Stambulisky. But for some reason—whether internal or external is not clear—this wise policy weakened. In June of the present year Bulgarian *komitadji* bands again began their incursions into Serbian Macedonia, and the pleasanter feeling of the preceding months has now been extinguished. Relations with Rumania and Greece are also strained. Rumania has been disliked in Sofia because of the evictions of Bulgar peasants from the southern Dobrudja and a succession of frontier incidents of obscure origin. But with Greece a more satisfactory entente had been established than could have been looked for less than a year after the Demi Hissar affair. This now goes by the board, Jugoslavia and Rumania having concerted with Greece to present a united front against the *komitadji* danger. Bulgaria cannot stand alone against her neighbors; they have

only to close their frontiers to deprive her of all easy communication with western Europe. One may conclude, then, that provided no outside encouragement is offered, the government will have to agree to suppress the Macedo-Bulgar Revolutionary Committee (which has had headquarters in Sofia itself) and to disarm the bands which this Committee has been sending across the frontiers on errands of pillage and murder. This step has long been inevitable. If M. Liaptcheff is able—and willing—to take it promptly the Balkans will feel more than compensated for their latest difficulties.

But if the Balkan states on the whole seem to be pursuing their way under skies that are fairly serene by comparison with those of the past, they have not yet recovered from the rapid overturns of 1912 and 1913 and the convulsive shock of the Great War. If fresh disasters are to be avoided, their complicated new relationships, their inevitable rivalries and adjustments, must be studied more intelligently and with more charity than usually used to be given to Balkan matters at the Ballplatz, in St. Petersburg, or at the Sublime Porte. M. Seignobos in 1896 remarked that “the whole political history of Europe since 1871 has concentrated in the Balkan peninsula.” His statement may be applied with even more justice to the succeeding decades than to the quarter-century be-

tween 1871 and 1896. And to-day the answer to many of the central problems of European peace must still be sought in the disputes of the Balkan peoples over such matters as frontiers, ports, and railways, as well as in their abstract sentiments, their rival conceptions of national destiny.

CHAPTER II

JUGOSLAV UNITY: IS IT REAL?

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD has said that those who have great virtues usually have great faults. The virtues of the Yugoslavs were too constantly in evidence during the war to need retelling. Their faults, such as one might expect to find in a people lacking political experience, have come more into play during the long-drawn negotiations and disappointments of peace, which everywhere in Europe have been trying the reasonableness of men as severely as the hardships and dangers of war tried their bodies and souls. Yugoslavia being the most powerful factor in the new Balkans, and observers often professing to see grave disruptive forces at work there, this little study of post-war problems in southeastern Europe will begin by casting up the account of Yugoslav failures and achievements in the brief period since the collapse of the Hapsburg monarchy gave its subject races a chance to experiment with the freedom of which they long had dreamed.

It is difficult to generalize about Yugoslavia, in-

habited as it is by three peoples—Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes—who, though closely united by the primary ties of race and language, differ in almost everything else. They are the descendants of three Slavic tribes that pushed up the Danube Valley and into the western regions of the Balkan peninsula in the seventh century. The Slovenes, inhabiting the northwestern part of the Yugoslav territory, early came under Germanic rule. The Kingdom of Croatia was attached to Hungary, though keeping its own entity, as early as 1102. The Serb kingdom, after varying fortunes culminating in the magnificence of Tsar Stephen Dushan, crowned in 1346 as “Emperor of the Serbs and Greeks,” with territories stretching from the Danube to Thessaly and from the Adriatic well into what is to-day Bulgaria, went down at last before the Turkish invasion; the fatal blow was received on the Field of the Blackbirds on June 28, 1389, a day remembered by the Serbs through five centuries as a day of mourning—now the national holiday. The Serbs, having been Christianized from the east, belong to the Greek Orthodox Church and, like all Slavs of that Church, write with Cyrillic characters. The Croats and Slovenes, on the other hand, are Roman Catholic and, though speaking the same tongue as their Serb kinsmen, write with our Latin characters. The difference in religion is per-

haps less important than some writers have said. There is an old Serbian proverb, "A brother is dear whatever his faith." But the resulting difference in outlook has profoundly affected the psychology of the three groups. The Serbs have looked eastward toward Constantinople. The Croats and Slovenes have looked west across the Adriatic to Rome or north to Budapest and that most Catholic of all capitals, Vienna.

The new state of Jugoslavia soon discovered that this different orientation of its western and eastern halves had decided results in the field of practical politics. The Croats and Slovenes had always been accustomed to seeing their politicians go up to Vienna and Budapest as to the stronghold of an enemy, there to play, quite as a matter of course, a rôle of obstruction and opposition. They found it difficult overnight to adopt more positive and constructive habits. For the people of the remote Balkan principality of Serbia politics had been something much more real and much more hard. They had struggled against Turk and Hapsburg for over a hundred years before achieving independence. It was difficult for some of them to realize that the fight was over and that qualities of compromise were now needed. Since the war there has been a disposition on the part of the Croats to talk about the old days

when trains were run better, when living was cheaper, when comfortable hotels awaited politicians at Vienna and Budapest instead of the less pretentious hostelries of Belgrade, and when political life offered just as many chances for oratorical display, but with lighter responsibilities. To this the Serbs make rejoinder that they may be unsophisticated, but that they have been forced by circumstances to cultivate a stability and moral force lacking in the Croat character, and their tone is one of rather supercilious envy toward the fortunate sections of the country which were not ravaged by the enemy and which cannot claim, except in notable individual cases, much of the glory for the outcome.

Since the beginning of the war Serbia's destinies have seldom been out of the hands of Nikola Pashitch, now over eighty, an inveterate enemy of all Serbia's enemies, whether Turk, Bulgar, Austrian, or Magyar, a man of unusual authority and perspicacity in party politics, a towering relic of old Balkan days when every man's hand was against his neighbor, and the devil, or one of the Great Powers, took the hindmost.¹ He carried Serbia through the war and fought her battles at the Peace Conference, where his patriarchal white beard furnished local color for re-

¹ M. Pashitch was born December 19, 1845. He first became head of a Serbian government thirty-five years ago. During the reign of the Austrophil Obrenovitch dynasty he twice served terms in prison.

THE NEW BALKANS

porters, though his inability to communicate adequately in any language save Serbian barred him from making Yugoslav aims understood abroad. He accepted, though with less enthusiasm than some, the achievement of Yugoslav national unity, and he became the first Premier of the new kingdom in which his more familiar Serbia was merged. What doubts he had regarding the strength of the new structure led him naturally to bend every effort



THE JUGOSLAV STATE

toward cementing and consolidating it. Knowing that there were persons of influence in the state who had fared better under the old régime than they were likely to do under the new, and that the country was surrounded by former enemies ready to take advantage of the first sign of weakness, he pressed for the creation of a strong central government, able to override forces of disintegration within and presenting a

united front, diplomatic, military, and commercial, toward threatened aggression from without. The constitution which he had Parliament adopt erased the old historic frontiers, supplanted the provincial diets by one legislative body, and otherwise sought to centralize authority in Belgrade. In justification of a rigorous supervision of credit activities all over the country he pointed out that after the armistice Serbia willingly had prejudiced her own excellent financial position by assuming jointly with Croatia and the other former Austro-Hungarian provinces the share of these latter in the Dual Monarchy's state debt; and he asked whether, in view of the fact that, in the interests of national unity, the Serbian dinar had been brought down to the value of the Croat and Slovene crown, the business men of Zagreb and Ljubljana were fair in demanding the right to take individual action that might depress the whole national currency and work fresh hardship for the Serbs. But whatever the first necessities for rigorous national consolidation, economic as well as political, it can fairly be said that the process was pressed too fast and carried too far.

Croat particularism found its chief protagonist in a Zagreb bookseller named Stefan Raditch, who was already viewed with suspicion in Belgrade because he had been a supporter of the Hapsburgs during the

war. Raditch displayed immense activity and ability in organizing the peasants of Croatia into a party of which he became the absolute arbiter. The fact that he had written odes in honor of the Emperor Franz Josef did not seem to hamper his facility in representing himself to the peasantry as a patriotic liberator and their particular patron. Under Raditch's voluble direction Croat opposition to the centralist tendencies of the Yugoslav government (and incidentally the competition of agricultural Serbia) grew into republicanism and separatism. It is difficult to judge how much the Croat peasant has ever cared about either principle. There are plenty of stories of peasants who shout for a republic, and when asked to name their candidate for first president say, with some surprise, why, Alexander Karageorgevitch, of course. Even if such tales are true they prove little except that the peasants are easily influenced by demagoguery. In any case, few persons who have traveled much in Croatia since the war, who have talked with the Croat political and intellectual leaders and with the peasant deputies elected to Parliament, have ever really believed either that Croatia is likely to try seriously to split off from Serbia or that, so long as Serbia retains her present dynasty, Croatia will do more than talk about a republic.

In the first Yugoslav Parliament, with a member-

ship of 417, the four principal parties were the Radicals, under Pashitch, with 92 members; the Democrats, under the Serbian leader Davidovitch and the Croat anti-Raditch leader Pribichevitch, with 91; the Croat Peasant party, under Raditch, with 50; and the Communists with 58. Raditch held the Croat Peasant delegates in the hollow of his hand, and he took the important decision that none of them should attend the sittings of Parliament at Belgrade. With a makeshift coalition between the two leading parties, and a party with 50 members abstaining from parliamentary life altogether, it can be seen that the premiership of Jugoslavia was no sinecure. A crisis was reached in the autumn of 1922 when one wing of the Democrats began flirting with Raditch. Pashitch dissolved the Radical-Democratic coalition and resigned. Upon being called back to office he formed a purely Radical Cabinet and set to work laying his plans to gain an absolute majority in the coming elections. But in those elections, though he increased the Radical seats from 92 in a Parliament numbering 417 members to 109 in a Parliament numbering 311 (the membership of Parliament had been cut down to a proportional representation basis by the new constitution), he was still far short of a majority. Raditch at the same time increased his forces to 70. The Democratic representation de-

creased to 52; the Serbian Agrarian party, of whose constructive program much was hoped, frittered away its chances by internecine disputes and nearly disappeared from the scene; and the Communists were annihilated, partly, no doubt, owing to strong-arm methods, but perhaps even more because various discontented radical minorities which before had voted the Communist ticket as a rebuff to the new government now gave allegiance to one of the major parties or put forward candidates of their own.

A point to be noted incidentally about these 1923 elections was that of the seven deputies elected from Montenegro only two were "separatists"—*i.e.*, opposed to the incorporation of Montenegro in the Yugoslav state. The fact that candidates openly opposed to the existing Yugoslav régime were allowed to make their campaign unmolested, and that the two elected could proceed to take their seats in Parliament in Belgrade, indicated the correctness of reports by official British observers at the time of the preceding Montenegrin elections, to the effect that the majority of Montenegrins had welcomed the act of union under King Alexander—the grandson of the late King Nicholas of Montenegro—as the fulfillment of his-
toric hopes.

Lacking a majority, Pashitch on the morrow of the elections had to turn to his old task of forming

a coalition. He first sent emissaries to Zagreb. They discussed with Raditch personally the possibilities of reaching a *modus vivendi*, and reported that, though the Croat leader was willing to admit that the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes probably had to live together, the bonds between them must be as shadowy as possible and each province must go its own way—politically, commercially, culturally. Whatever chance there might have been of compromise was destroyed by the succession of intemperate speeches which Raditch proceeded to deliver in various parts of Croatia, attacking the crown and the army, and urging men approaching military age not to present themselves for service. Meanwhile, by a cardinal error of tactics, he continued refusing to allow the Croat Peasant deputies to present themselves at Belgrade. Despite his republican propaganda, their mandates at that time would still have been ratified without question. By abstaining from parliamentary life he not only laid himself open to criticism as being unwilling to take a proper share of responsibility in national affairs, but he also left his opponents free to direct the policy of the country and to pass several repressive laws against communism, from the application of which he himself later suffered.

Not without reason, in view of his activities which now extended to foreign as well as domestic affairs,

Raditch in July, 1923, thought himself in danger of arrest and left the country. Meeting with rebuffs both in Paris and in London, he proceeded to make his second cardinal error. Figuratively thumbing his nose at the Western Powers who had refused to internationalize the Croat question, and at Pashitch, left in undisputed power at Belgrade, he went angrily off to Moscow. There he joined the Peasant International; and on August 3, 1924, the Croat Peasant deputies, in session in Zagreb, voted that the party should take membership in the International also. Inasmuch as Smyrnov, commissar for agriculture in the Soviet government, was president of the Peasant International, and since the headquarters of the latter were in Moscow and its foreign activities were often carried on through the emissaries of the Soviets, the subsequent protests of Raditch that he was in no sense a communist did not meet with general credence. Probably, however, he was being quite truthful. Certainly his peasant constituency has never been communist, nor are those who from time to time have been his political bedfellows, such as Dr. Trumbitch. It seems more probable that he went to Moscow in the doubly naïve hope of scaring Belgrade into acquiescence and of using Moscow as a pawn in his political maneuvers.

The action of the Croat Peasant leaders in aligning

themselves with the Peasant International came, as will be seen, at a disastrous moment. For a long time the King and many moderate Serbs had been disturbed by the continued absence from Parliament of the Croat Peasant representatives. In the spring of 1924 Raditch belatedly appeared to realize that he was losing an opportunity of coming to power by not making a deal with the other opposition groups—in particular with the Serb Democrats under Davidovitch and the Slovenes under Father Koroshets. He decided, as a first step, to send twenty of his deputies to Parliament. Pashitch by now was thoroughly aroused against Raditch, but after some argument consented that the twenty should take their seats. Raditch then sent up another block of deputies. Pashitch saw that if all the Raditch deputies were admitted his majority would disappear, so he adjourned Parliament (as he technically had a right to do) and requested authority from the King to hold new elections.

King Alexander was in a difficult situation. He owed much to Pashitch, but he saw the danger of slamming the door in the face of the Croat deputies whom he so much wished to get back into parliamentary life. The opposition had been in a minority because Raditch had refused to participate, but supposing that they could all unite they would be a

majority. The King felt that in this unusual situation he was justified in going beyond the technical limitations of his position. He consulted the president of Parliament, Ljuba Jovanovitch, and being given Jovanovitch's opinion that the existing Parliament could still work, he accepted Pashitch's resignation, refused him authority to hold new elections, and intrusted the formation of a more or less neutral Cabinet to Jovanovitch. Jovanovitch's attempt having failed, the King consulted Davidovitch, leader of the Serb opposition, and was assured by him that he could secure the collaboration of Raditch on terms not detrimental to the safety of the state—*i.e.*, a definite program was to be drawn up, specifying that the monarchy and the union were to be preserved. On this understanding he intrusted to Davidovitch the powers of government. The King's courage and good sense in thus finding means for giving the opposition an opportunity to form a Cabinet and solve the Croat question must be recognized.¹

The intransigence of Pashitch had been circumvented. Raditch's erratic habits and lack of political sense were now to block the path to understanding. The reply to the first efforts of Davidovitch to get the Croat leader's co-operation on any program falling

¹ An experienced French statesman, not given to flattery, told me recently that he considered King Alexander "*le premier chef d'état de l'Europe.*"

within the general bounds of his undertaking with the King was the action of the Peasant party deputies in voting to join the Peasant International, as already described. Instead of seizing the proffered opportunity to work out the Yugoslav constitutional question in Parliament, Raditch hailed it as a sign of weakness and intensified his attacks on the army and his propaganda for a separate Croat republic. The King became uneasy, but in reply to his repeated urgings that Davidovitch agree upon terms with his prospective collaborator he received nothing but assurances that the matter was under way and that all would be well.

Premier Davidovitch had come to power in July; it became October, and still nothing definite had happened. Raditch was accustomed to make a fiery harangue each Sunday. On the Saturday following one of his talks with the King, Davidovitch sent a special emissary to Zagreb to beg Raditch to use moderation in his speech the next day, pointing out that the whole project of collaboration between the Serb opposition and the Croat Peasant party was on the point of collapse. That Sunday's speech was the one in which Raditch, in particularly violent terms, asserted that the government was squandering 10,000,000,000 dinars a year to maintain a vast army of 300,000 soldiers. As the Budget Law

decreed that there should be 134,764 men of all ranks in the army, and 3,224 men of all ranks in the navy, and provided less than 2,000,000,000 dinars a year for their combined support (or less than one-fifth of the sum mentioned by Raditch), the Minister of War resigned, protesting that he could not continue in a government predicated on a man whom he considered so mischievous. The King reminded the Premier that he had given him a mandate to form a Cabinet on his assurance that it would be a majority government in which all the former opposition groups took their share of responsibility, pointed out that the collaboration of Raditch had not been secured and evidently could not be secured, and said he saw nothing for it but for Davidovitch to admit failure. But he told Davidovitch that if he chose to make a public statement detailing precisely what had occurred he would believe that Davidovitch had tried conscientiously to carry out his undertaking to the Crown, and that he would feel justified in asking him to remain in office and organize new elections. The Prime Minister accepted, but in the statement which he drafted showed that he still dreamed more of conciliating Raditch than of facing the situation frankly and carrying his program energetically to the country. The King felt he had now no resource but to ask for his resignation.

Efforts then undertaken to form a coalition Cabinet failed because of the general anger provoked in Serbia by a speech in which Raditch went further than he had dared go before in defining his relations with Moscow. "The Soviet government," he said, "has promised me, through the medium of Chicherin, that it will help us if we are threatened. In such a case we shall oppose the Belgrade rule with all our strength." The King by now was rather tired of his efforts to give the opposition a chance to try its hand at settling the Croat question. He saw that Raditch had let Davidovitch down, and that Davidovitch had in turn let him down. He turned back to Pashitch (who, after all, represented the largest single group in Parliament). He instructed Pashitch to form a Cabinet and hold the elections which, at the request of Davidovitch, he had refused to allow him to hold several months earlier.

In the new elections, which took place February 8, 1925, Raditch about held his ground, but Pashitch, by cutting into several minor groups, increased his representation from 131 to 162. This constituted a small but absolute majority. The prospect indeed looked dark for the Croat Peasant party, stigmatized as communists and with their leader in jail. The Pashitch forces, rejoicing, declared they would validate none of the mandates of the Raditch mem-

bers unless they specifically repudiated Moscow and disowned Raditch himself.

At this critical moment an important statement was made in Parliament by Raditch's nephew, Pavle Raditch, to the effect that the Peasant party was not communist, that it recognized the union and the monarchy, and that it promised to use only parliamentary means in its efforts to change the existing constitution. Pavle Raditch reminded Parliament that when the Croat Peasant party was first organized it had opposed communism, and in extenuation of its later dealings with Moscow pleaded that it "always had to fight on two fronts—on the one hand against the centralist forces, on the other against the extremists." He also explained the distinction that existed in his mind between the Peasant International and the Communist International, and stated the position of his uncle's party, as follows:

With regard to the Peasant International of Moscow, all information coming from foreign sources—English, American and French—can only confirm our point of view, which is that it has nothing in common with the Comintern—that is to say, with the Communist International. Still less is it an organization belonging to the latter. Independently of this fact, and of the fact that the Croat Peasant party has not yet adhered definitely to the Peasant International, I declare now that we have taken no engagement and that we have no relations with this Peasant Inter-

national, and that our Central Committee will establish this fact at its first meeting. On August 3, 1924, our parliamentary group took up the report of its president, in which he stated that the Croat Peasant party should join the Peasant International on the condition that it would maintain integrally its own program and tactics. He stressed the fact that he only saw in this the establishment of relations between the Russian people and the Croat people, and that this Peasant International is nothing more than the continuation of the Peasant Pan-Russian Federation founded in 1899 and which in 1904 had 30,000,000 members. The acceptance of this motion to join was simply the expression of the confidence of the group in its president, on whom it absolutely relied.

At the advice of many party leaders, including Foreign Minister Nintchitch, Premier Pashitch decided not to hold to the letter of his demands, and with great good sense accepted Raditch's *volte face* as genuine and final. Parliament forthwith voted to seat all the Croat members elected for the first time on February 8, undertook to make an investigation into the communist activities of the thirty deputies who were re-elected (and who therefore had participated in the vote to affiliate with the Peasant International), and only invalidated definitely the election of Raditch himself and four lieutenants held in jail for trial on specific charges of treason. On June 22 the thirty deputies-elect whose admission had been left in doubt were seated; and on July 18 a new

Cabinet was formed under Pashitch in which the followers of Raditch had four portfolios. A few hours after the formation of this Cabinet Raditch was set at liberty, and later, in November, he became Minister of Education.

The subsequent breakdown of the Pashitch-Raditch coalition (April 4, 1926), owing to Raditch's inability to refrain from public attacks on his Cabinet colleagues, did not alter the principal conclusion to be drawn from these events—namely, that in essence the Serbo-Croat dispute had all along been far more political than some were led to believe. The theory that a bridgeless chasm separated Serbs and Croats, and that a period of civil war impended, fell to pieces in face of the sudden compatibility of the majority of Serb and Croat politicians as soon as it became politically expedient. The demonstration was merely carried a stage further by the split which then occurred in the ranks of both the Radical party and the Croat Peasant party, resulting in the formation of a neutral Cabinet containing leading members of both parties, but without the participation of either Pashitch or Raditch. If the next step should be, as some predict, the break-up of the old parties and their re-formation on nation-wide lines, the state will not be the loser.

Raditch has such abilities as a political orator and

organizer that prophecy about him is futile, particularly as he is now trying his hand in a new field, having invaded first Dalmatia and more recently the Slovenian countryside, where Father Koroshets has long been intrenched in the hearts of the strongly Roman Catholic peasantry. But even in Croatia he can hardly command the same attention for his stenorian battle orders as he did before he changed the objectives of his troops so often. And in any case, whatever the personal fortunes of the individual leaders on either side, the arena has now become definitely political. Even the most skeptical foreign observer is not likely to believe any longer that the Yugoslav union is, or ever has been, really in question.

It was six weary years after Yorktown before the Continental Convention finally succeeded in drafting the Constitution of the United States. Scarcely a longer period has now elapsed since the convoking of the first Constituent Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The events of these first years, brought into perspective, prove beyond question that there is such a thing as a Yugoslav national spirit and that when put to the test it overrides sectionalism. The Yugoslav feeling, awakened through the last century by a long line of high-minded and resourceful leaders in Serbia and in the Slav provinces of the Hapsburgs, hardened in the struggles

against Magyarization and Germanization, materialized by the Pact of Corfu and legitimized by the treaties of peace, is not going to die merely because the present is always harder than the future and because conciliation is more trying than conflict.

CHAPTER III

FIUME, "LA CITTÀ MORTA"

IN the years after the armistice Fiume acquired a political reputation quite out of proportion to its past, and probably to its future, commercial importance. Fiume became the crux of the Adriatic Question, which more than a few European statesmen would sorrowfully have agreed with Lord Curzon in calling the most thorny of all the thorny problems that pressed for settlement at Paris. It overturned Italian governments, divided and distracted the new Yugoslav state, played havoc with the alliances of the powers, furnished the theme of the most sensational *opéra bouffe* ever produced on an international stage, contributed heavily to the undermining of President Wilson's hold on Europe, and on half a dozen occasions escaped by a hair being the cause of a new war.

What is the present condition of this Port of Trouble, and what will be its future? Is it regaining its former importance as one of the great doors for the trade of central and eastern Europe? Are its

citizens, sustained for so long on fervid political aphorisms and Italian bounties, turning successfully to their old commercial ways? What are its Yugoslav neighbors in the suburb of Susak—separated from Fiume proper by the Italo-Yugoslav frontier and a little ribbon of water only twenty feet wide—making of the peculiar economic and geographical arrangement agreed upon after so much wrangling by the Italian and Yugoslav governments? These questions are to the point, even if the special correspondents who in the days of d'Annunzio thronged Fiume's now empty streets are long since departed and its name no longer starts daily from a dozen headlines, for on their answer still depends in some measure the future peace of the Balkans. Before attempting this answer we must clear up the confused history of the troubled years since the armistice. The easiest way seems to set down the red-letter dates in chronological order.¹

April 14, 1919.—A deadlock having developed in Paris regarding Italian and Yugoslav claims in Istria, Dalmatia, and Fiume, President Wilson addresses a memorandum to the Italian delegation in which he repudiates the arrangement envisaged in the secret Pact of London (signed with Italy by Great Britain, France, and Russia, April 26, 1915) as be-

¹ For details see Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. iv, pp. 278-337; and Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1924*, pp. 408-422.

ing inconsistent with American war principles, and states his belief that as "Fiume is by its situation and by all its conditions of development not an Italian port, but an international port, serving the country east and north of the gulf of Fiume," it should be made autonomous, though within the jurisdiction of the Yugoslav customs.¹

April 23, 1919.—Italy having refused the Yugoslav proposal for a plebiscite in the disputed areas, and the tension having steadily increased, President Wilson issues a second statement, pointing out that Fiume had not been included in Italy's rewards promised by the Pact of London, amplifying his economic arguments, and appealing to the Italian people to be content with Italy's "natural frontiers." To this Orlando and Sonnino reply by leaving Paris, but return on May 5. Orlando's defeat in the Italian Parliament on June 19 is followed by the accession of Nitti to power.

July 6, 1919.—Riots between pro-Italian elements in Fiume and French troops forming part of the Inter-Allied garrison culminate in the killing of nine French soldiers, resulting in the decision of the Supreme Council to reduce the Italian garrison and to send an

¹ The whole hinterland of Fiume is inhabited by Yugoslavs. The Hungarian census of 1910 showed 22,488 Italians and 13,351 Yugoslavs in Fiume itself, and 1,500 Italians and 11,009 Yugoslavs in the adjoining suburb of Susak, or a total of 23,988 Italians and 24,351 Yugoslavs in the whole city.

Inter-Allied High Commission to administer the city and a British police force to maintain order.

September 17, 1919.—While Paris is considering an American compromise proposal that Fiume go to Italy and Susak to Yugoslavia, but that the port and railways be administered by the League of Nations, on this date (the date set for the new Inter-Allied régime to begin its functions) d'Annunzio and his armed Italian bands enter and seize the city.

December 9, 1919.—The Supreme Council suggests a large "Buffer State" under the protection of the League, but Nitti reiterates Italy's demand for the fulfillment of the Pact of London and asks a number of concessions which the Supreme Council had already refused.

January 14, 1920.—The "Buffer State" proposal is withdrawn in favor of a plan by which Fiume proper would become independent under the League, a narrow coastal strip running up to Fiume would be ceded to Italy, Susak would go to Yugoslavia, and Yugoslavia would have Scutari in northern Albania. (The American Commission had left Paris immediately after the formulation of the December 9 proposal.)

January 20, 1920.—While Dr. Trumbitch, the Yugoslav spokesman, was temporizing with this proposal (which would have added another 60,000 to

the 400,000 Jugoslavs already assigned to Italian sovereignty by the "Wilson line"), and sadly considering the statement of Clemenceau and Lloyd-George that unless it were accepted they would agree to the application of the Pact of London, Washington cables to ask whether it is intended to dispose of the Adriatic Question without consulting the United States and against the well-known American thesis. This bombshell is followed on February 10 by President Wilson's memorandum setting forth his objections to the annexation of more of Istria to Italy, the creation of a troublesome territorial link between Italy and Fiume, and the division of Albania. After some sharp interchanges of views, England and France decide to leave the matter to Rome and Belgrade to work out as best they can.

November 10, 1920.—Signature by Italy and Jugoslavia of the Treaty of Rapallo. The independence of the Free State of Fiume is recognized "in perpetuity," while its area is extended westward to make it contiguous with Italian territory. A mixed commission is appointed to delimit its frontiers. Simultaneously, Count Sforza delivers to the Yugoslav delegation a letter (kept secret at the time) agreeing on behalf of his government that the part of the Fiume port known as Baros Basin, together with the delta between it and Susak, should go to Jugoslavia.

D'Annunzio placards Fiume "*Italia ó Morte*," and blows up the bridges connecting the city with Susak.

January 18, 1921.—After protracted parleys and some minor engagements, Italian regulars expel d'Annunzio, who refuses to recognize the Treaty of Rapallo. He departs saying: "I leave to Fiume my dead, my sorrow, and my victory."

April 24, 1921.—Free election in Fiume under the auspices of the Provisional Government. Heavy defeat of the elements favoring annexation by the elements favoring autonomy, despite the presence of an Italian garrison and the pro-Italian character of the Provisional Government supervising the election. This unpleasant event infuriates the annexationists, who burn the ballots and drive out the autonomist leader Zanella.

June 25, 1921.—The Italo-Yugoslav commission for delimiting the frontiers of the Free State having reached the question of the line between Fiume and Susak, Count Sforza is forced to admit in the Italian Parliament the existence of his letter assigning Baros to Yugoslavia. Italian bands immediately seize and occupy Baros and the adjoining delta. Sforza resigns.

October 5, 1921.—First meeting of the Free State government elected in April. Zanella is chosen

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President. Continuous wrangling and fighting between autonomists and annexationists.

March 3, 1922.—Fascisti "Putsch" which overthrows the Zanella government. Two weeks later Fiume is occupied in force by Italian troops.

April 9, 1922.—Opening of the Italian-Jugoslav conference at Santa Margherita. The resulting treaty, providing for the Italian evacuation of Susak and Dalmatia, the delimitation of the frontiers of Fiume, and the resumption of trade, is at last signed at Rome on October 23. Three days later occurs the Fascisti "March on Rome." On October 30, Mussolini assumes the powers of government.

September 17, 1923.—The mixed commission for the delimitation of the Free State's boundaries having been unable to settle the question of Baros, Mussolini sends General Giardino to Fiume to assume control of the Free State in the name of the Italian government. Yugoslavia refrains from military or other action to prevent this repudiation of the Treaty of Rapallo.

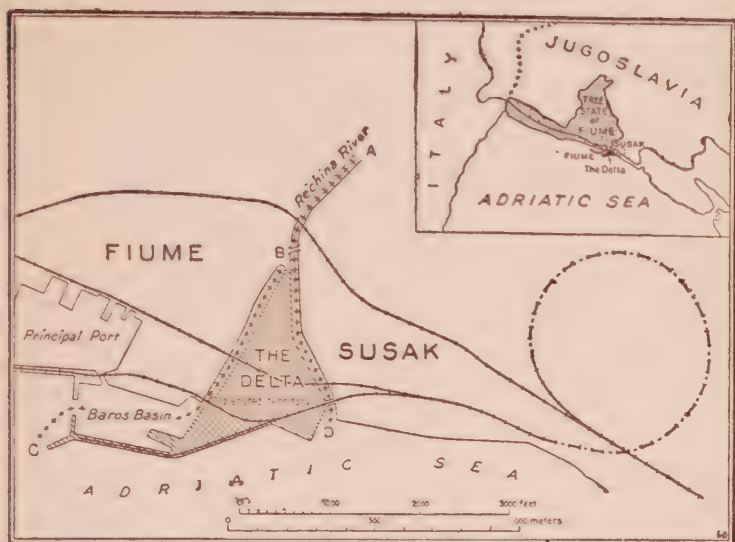
January 27, 1924.—Yugoslavia recognizes the absorption of the Free State by Italy; Baros and the delta remain Yugoslav, and Yugoslav commerce is granted privileges in the port of Fiume proper.

March 16, 1924.—King Victor Emmanuel celebrates in Fiume the city's official annexation to Italy.

Fiume lies about forty miles south of Trieste at the head of the Gulf of Quarnero, which Dante over six hundred years ago spoke of as bathing the furthest limits of Italy. Behind rise the rugged Karst Mountains, down the side of which descend two railway lines, one from the north, from Ljubljana and Trieste, the other—the more important—from the east, from Zagreb *via* Susak. As the Quarnero comes into view, the visitor arriving to-day by rail sees here and there the burnt-sienna and dull orange splotches of fishing sails, the wake of some motor-boat spreading into the distance, and perhaps the ferry running over to Abbazia. Apart from these and the usual passenger steamers to the neighboring islands the sea is generally empty. The port, if we take account of the business which it is *equipped* to do, is empty too. Over two years after the annexation of President Wilson's "Free City" to the Kingdom of Italy grass still grows in the cracks of the massive wharves built with such labor and at such cost by Hungarian financiers. The quays jut out grandly into the sea, but children play up and down the derricks that used to freight merchant ships to every part of the world. There usually is a straggling row of sloops tied up at the public wharves, together with an ocean-going ship or two awaiting repairs; a certain number of coastal steamers stop at Fiume on their voyages to

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and from the Dalmatian and Istrian ports, or to the Levant, though many pass it by; and an occasional steamer of some size puts in for the transit freight that Hungary and Rumania send out over the old



THE PORT OF FIUME

Baros Basin and the Delta (shaded on the above map) were promised Yugoslavia by Count Sforza at the time of the signature of the Treaty of Rapallo, November 10, 1920. They finally passed to the sovereignty of Yugoslavia January 27, 1924, upon the latter's agreeing to the abolishment of the Free State of Fiume (shown in the insert map) and its annexation to Italy. The present frontier between Italy (Fiume) and Yugoslavia (Susak) therefore follows the dotted line A-B-C.

route, as well as for the lumber, beet pulp, and other bulky freight that goes out from Yugoslavia in limited quantities. The Yugoslav zone in the port is not being used, as Belgrade is unwilling to accept the

present arrangement as definitive until every outstanding commercial question between the two countries has been adjusted and the adjustments have been ratified by the respective parliaments. There is no doubt, too, that Belgrade, by limiting the use of Fiume, seeks to set the small but growing Yugoslav ports on their feet. On the other hand, Fiume gets small comfort from the Italian government, which cares much more about the difficulties of the more influential and more Italian port of Trieste. In other words, Fiume on one side is boycotted and on the other neglected.

The statistics tell the story. As a result of the 75,000,000 gold crowns which the Hungarian government spent on the port between 1871 and 1913, and the 6,000,000 or 7,000,000 crowns which before the war it was paying annually as subsidies to various Hungarian navigation companies, the sea-borne trade of Fiume, which averaged only 100,000 tons yearly in the 'sixties, doubled during the next decade, and in 1913 amounted to about 2,250,000 tons. In the ten months of 1924 following the annexation to Italy the imports and exports of the port totaled 392,223 tons, and for 1925 the figure was 718,843 tons. In other words, not only was the rapid development of Fiume terminated by the war, but the present arrangement of frontiers leaves it

doing less than a third of the business it used to do. The Italian government is unable to do much to help remedy this serious situation. Trieste, the formidable rival of Fiume, is itself meeting with difficulties, owing to Hamburg's competition for the trade of Czechoslovakia and the upper Danube Valley, while Venice, whose independent republican traditions and indifference to the new Italian imperialism make it a constant worry to the Fascisti government, must not be allowed to regret that two new ports, Trieste and Fiume, have been brought within the Italian frontiers and therefore into competition for whatever favors the Italian government is able to distribute. It is not surprising that Rome, forced to choose between her three ports in the north Adriatic, reserves her strongest sympathies for the two that are most important nationally and that are best able to help themselves. This was the result foreseen by nearly everyone, including most of the Fiumani (as testified by their votes), who 'helped by independence or League control to escape the fate which has now come down upon them.

Perhaps an eighth of the merchandise arriving in Fiume is for local consumption, for smuggling out into surrounding territory, and for local re-export. The great bulk of the goods handled is through freight in transit to and from the hinterland. For

this reason the railway connections of Fiume are of as much importance as the organization of the port itself. Unfortunately for Fiume, the main railway from Zagreb has to climb to a height of 2,745 feet to cross the Karst ridge, necessitating the use of special locomotives. This means that for Fiume to compete in the long run with other ports—with Trieste, and with the Yugoslav ports of Spalato and Sebenico which one day are to be given a new rail connection, direct and with easy gradients, with the interior—every other factor must be favorable. No one would say that this is likely to be the case. We have seen that already one part of her commercial organism has been taken away and attributed to the active and ambitious Yugoslav suburb of Susak. Furthermore, the railway coming from Zagreb divides in Susak, one branch descending by a spiral tunnel to the Baros Basin, the other continuing by a more gradual descent to the main Fiume railway station. This gives Jugoslavia a small window of her own beside the big Italian front door—a window which an energetic mayor and town council are trying to amplify as rapidly as possible. Of course they have to meet the competition of Spalato; nevertheless, whereas only 474 vessels cleared from Susak in 1923—*i.e.*, during the period of highest strain and conflict—the number reached 2,293 in 1924, actually

a larger number than Fiume counted in the same period. When it is noted that in the same year (figures for 1925 have been inexcusably delayed) Spalato boasted 6,721 vessels departing and Sebenico 2,153, it is seen how much of its rightful trade Fiume is probably losing, and it can be judged that when the new Yugoslav ports perfect their harbor works and rail connections it will suffer still more.

To postpone the evil day, the Italian government has brought pressure on Jugoslavia to accept the so-called "Adriatic tariff," which grants a 30 per cent reduction from local rail rates on transit freight from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, etc., destined for export through Trieste or Fiume. Belgrade, much against its will, seems to have acceded to this demand; but the ratifying convention awakened such violent protests from the rival Yugoslav ports that it was held up for some time in the Parliament. The further Italian request that Jugoslavia agree not to grant lower rail rates to Susak, Spalato, or other ports than are granted Fiume and Trieste has been steadily refused. Doubtless the adoption of the "Adriatic tariff" on the Yugoslav railways was one of the demands Rome made in exchange for withholding support from Greece in Saloniki and from Bulgaria in Macedonia, but even those benefits, important as they would be for Yugoslav foreign policy, seem to

many Jugoslavs to be bought too dear if the price is Jugoslavia's deliberate favoring of the trade of rival Italian ports.

The rather somber coloring given this picture of Fiume does not mean that there is nothing to be said for the final Italo-Jugoslav arrangement as representing the best compromise that could be devised after five years of excited controversy. At any rate, the dispute is now narrowed down from one of grave international character between the Rome and Belgrade governments to one of commercial rivalries among Fiume and Trieste and Susak and Spalato, and to a consideration of whether Fiume itself is going to prosper as it should. When all is said and done, the latter is not a matter of world-wide concern. But it is safe to say that during the coming years not a few Fiumani will look back and regret that the obstinate American President did not have his way, so that instead of sitting by their half-empty harbor and reciting over to themselves the glorious words which d'Annunzio flung at them from his pinnacle of sacred egoism, they might hear the growing bustle of commerce and see the flags of many nations flying from the ships tied to their docks.

CHAPTER IV

THE ADRIATIC RAILWAY

GEOGRAPHY must take its share of responsibility for the inter-provincial differences which as already described have interfered with the cohesiveness of the new Yugoslav state. R. A. Ussher once wrote, rather flamboyantly, that "Nature and geography remain the same through all the ages." He forgot the power of mechanical science, which often is able to adapt geography to the needs of modern man. Major Temperley, more discerning, has pointed out in his excellent history of Serbia that until man could tunnel mountains, dry up marshes, and render rivers navigable, Yugoslav unity was an impracticable dream. A glance at a contour map of the Balkans will show that the statement is true. Recognizing its truth, the Yugoslavs since the war have been devoting much time to planning the unification of their railway system and the subduing of the mountains that have always separated their provinces one from the other and cut them off from the Adriatic Sea.

The task was a hard one, man as well as nature

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having made difficulties. The Yugoslav territory was supplied with less than 7,000 kilometers of normal-gauge railway lines, all in very bad shape as a result of the war, and divided into three distinct and un-



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co-ordinated systems—that of pre-war Serbia, and the Hungarian and Austrian systems, both tending northward, the one toward Budapest, the other toward Vienna. There was no east-and-west main line, adapted to the needs of the new geography. The

Serbian railways were linked up with the other two systems by just one single-track line, running the forty-three kilometers from Indjia to Belgrade. Over this solitary pair of rails had to pass all the through traffic between western and southeastern Europe—the traffic from Paris and Berlin to Constantinople and Saloniki—with the result that Yugoslav domestic business was often crowded out or delayed. The Paris-Trieste-Bucharest route also passes through Yugoslav territory. But though all these main channels of European trade cross Yugoslav territory, they neither begin nor end in Jugoslavia, so that the country's foreign commerce had everywhere to submit to the interference of a third party and run the risk of discrimination and delay.

It was to avoid this probable cause of friction that President Wilson worked for the internationalization of the port of Fiume. It is to be rid of this economic handicap that the Yugoslav government has been so insistent on securing what it considers adequate privileges for Yugoslav commerce in the Greek port of Saloniki, and that it is now busy with plans to build a direct line connecting the Yugoslav railway system with a Yugoslav port on the Adriatic.

In 1908, when Count Aerenthal, Foreign Minister for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was testing European sentiment in preparation for his sudden

annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, he proposed in the Austrian delegations that a railway be built southward into the Sandjak of Novibazar to join the Turkish railway coming north from Macedonia as far as Mitrovitza. Such a line, he urged, would not only promote Austrian expansion southward—Saloniki being the first objective of the *Drang nach Osten*—but would also serve important strategic and political purposes by dominating Serbia from a new angle. At once Russia entered her protest. It took the form of an offer to build Serbia another railroad, running in the other direction, which would connect the Slav hinterland with the Adriatic and start a current of commerce at cross-purposes to the north-and-south Germanic stream. But greater events came to monopolize the attention of the two powerful rivals, and for the time being both plans were abandoned. Austria found other means of accomplishing her ends and Russia let her project lapse—if ever she had seriously intended carrying it out. The Balkan Wars came and went, leaving heritages of poverty and economic disorder that made great investment schemes out of the question. And finally the Great War broke out.

In Belgrade after the armistice people spoke bitterly about Italy's determination to annex purely Slav lands and to hold all possible keys to Balkan

commerce, in contradiction to the understanding which they claimed was contained in the Pact of Rome. The Pact of Rome, to which were affixed the signatures of Signor Torre, head of the Italian Parliamentary Committee, and Dr. Trumbitch, head of the Yugoslav National Committee, was drawn up at a Congress of Oppressed Nationalities held in Rome in the spring of 1918, when it was seen that the revelation of the terms of the secret Pact of London was arousing Yugoslav hostility and was beginning to interfere with the co-operation of Italians and Yugoslavs in the work of breaking down the morale of the Austro-Hungarian armies. Article 6 engaged them "to decide amicably, equally in the interests of good and sincere future relations between the two peoples, the pending territorial questions on the basis of the principle of nationalities and of the right of peoples to dispose of their own destinies, and that so as not to prejudice the vital interests of the two nations, which will be defined at the moment of peace." The adoption of the Wilsonian phraseology did indeed seem to promise better than the claim put forward a few months later by the Italian delegation at Paris for the application of the Pact of London, plus Fiume. It is hardly open to question that the best interests of Italy would have been served by holding to the policy of 1918. From purely selfish

motives she should have made every effort to avoid antagonizing the most promising purchaser of her manufactured goods and the country best able to supply her with needed wheat and meat and lumber. Her hostility to the new Yugoslav state was based on the theory that it was simply the old Hapsburg power in new dress. But she merely succeeded in strengthening the very military force which she feared, by showing the Croats that they were largely dependent for the preservation of their rights along the Adriatic on the prestige of Serbian arms and on the diplomatic efforts of the united Yugoslav state. It is interesting in this connection to note that the Croat separatist movement gained momentum progressively as the Italian menace in the Adriatic lessened.

Denied the natural exit through Fiume, the Jugoslavs turned back to the more difficult project of tunneling the Dinaric Alps, bridging its chasms, and constructing on the shores of the Adriatic their own port to handle their shipments of lumber, wheat, wine, live stock, meat and copper. As was inevitable, the choice of the proper terminus for this railway became the subject of controversy between the various provincial elements, the Croats and Slovenes wanting a port in the north as near as possible to their former outlet at Fiume, the Serbians

noting the advantages their trade would derive from a southerly terminus on the borders of Albania.

The provision of the Treaty of Rapallo that Fiume should be an independent state seemed to make the matter of another Yugoslav outlet much less pressing, for not only was Fiume to be free to Yugoslav commerce, but by Count Sforza's accompanying letter it was agreed that Yugoslavia should have the adjoining Baros Basin. There was only a temporary slackening of tension, however, as disorders between autonomist Fiumani and Italian legionaries, local and imported, prevented trade of any sort, and as Italian bands occupied the Baros Basin and adjoining delta. Early in 1924 Yugoslavia tired of the effort to secure the execution of the Treaty of Rapallo and Count Sforza's concomitant note, and agreed to accept the annexation of Fiume to the Italian Crown on the proviso that Baros and the delta should remain in her hands and that her trade should have certain privileges in the port of Fiume proper.

Through these protracted and unsatisfactory negotiations the Yugoslav desire for a port permanently free from any sort of foreign control had naturally increased, and resentment at Italy's course made distasteful the idea of using the proffered privileges in Fiume, even supposing that they proved as generous as they sounded. Susak, next door to Fiume, an-

nounced plans for new harbor works and freight yards of its own; a number of valuable railway extensions were undertaken in various parts of the country, to both the normal and narrow-gauge systems; and work was pressed forward on the missing link, north of Knin, in the railway line running down from Zagreb to the port of Spalato. Now that this link is completed one can leave Zagreb in a *Wagon-Lit* at seven in the evening and be in Spalato the next morning—a novelty which only those who some time or other have wished to reach the Dalmatian coast from inland can really appreciate.

But though valuable locally, all these undertakings were mere preliminaries to the main task of constructing an adequate railway line, with low gradients, direct from the heart of the country to tide-water—a problem which remained, and remains.

With Susak and to a certain extent Fiume taking care of the most pressing needs of western Croatia and Slovenia, the choice of a proper site for the proposed railway terminus narrowed down to Spalato and Cattaro, the former lying about midway on the Dalmatian coast, the latter more to the south, at the foot of the Montenegrin mountains.¹ There was talk of other ports, but none of them possessed the needed accessibility from inland in addition to suitable sites

¹ See map of Jugoslavia in Chapter II.

for marine works and railway yards. Buccari, a hamlet at the top of a rocky fiord, is too far north to serve the interests of the whole country and would duplicate the function of Susak; besides, it lies near Pola, and therefore within the sphere of Italian influence. Zara is ruled out because the Treaty of Rapallo attributed it to Italy. Sebenico's sea approach is through a little gorge hardly wider than a ship; to construct a port there would be something like making an ocean entrance out of Hell Gate. Passing Spalato, we come to the old pirate nest of Almissa, and further south to Gravosa, the port of lovely old Ragusa and the terminus of the narrow-gauge mountain railway from Sarajevo. At either place prohibitively expensive port works would be necessary, while the adoption of Gravosa would have the added disadvantage of eliminating the present usefulness of the port, which is to be increased when the new Ivan tunnel on the Bosnian line (work on which was begun in February, 1926) cuts the running time from Sarajevo and makes possible heavier loads. South of Cattaro the search is simplified by the fact that there is no Yugoslav port pretending to be able to serve as the main outlet of a country with over 12,000,000 inhabitants. Scutari has possibilities, but it lies within the Albanian frontiers.¹

¹ To avoid confusing the reader, the more familiar pre-war names of the various Adriatic towns have been used. The Slav names, now officially

The southerly of the two favored routes would find in the Bocche di Cattaro one of the most magnificent harbors in the world. The surveyed line runs westward from Belgrade to Shabatz and then turns south *via* Vishegrad through the valley of the River Drin. It would not tap important districts en route, except at Vishegrad, where it would cross the narrow-gauge line connecting Old Serbia with Bosnia. Thus it would be mainly a through freight line. Its length would be about 250 miles, and the cost, including harbor works, would be about \$50,000,000—approximately the same as the cost of the proposed Spalato line and port.

The Spalato route likewise starts from Belgrade *via* Shabatz, but instead of turning sharply south there bends southwest to Zavidovitch, thence follows the valleys of the Bosna River to Sarajevo and of the Naretva River to Mostar, and reaches the Adriatic at Spalato, which, incidentally, is already the most important town in Dalmatia. The old-time port of Spalato is a relic of Venetian days, built on the scale of the Venetian galley. But on the inland side of the peninsula where stands Diocletian's town there opens up a great bight, known locally as the Canale

correct, are as follows: Spalato = Split; Cattaro = Kotor; Buccari = Bakar; Sebenico = Shibenik; Almissa = Omish; Gravosa = Gruz; Ragusa = Dubrovnik. The Slav name for Zara, an Italian enclave, is Zadar.

dei Castelli, which when dredged can give anchorage to the largest modern vessels and which has adjoining level land for wharves and railroad yards. Very important, the dreaded *bora* does not enter here to work the havoc it often does in most of the Dalmatian harbors. This line would develop valuable regions. But it has the disadvantage that it would be nearly a hundred kilometers longer than the Cattaro line, and the technical drawback that the sharper grades would be against the heavy export traffic. Also, it would replace a portion of the fairly satisfactory narrow-gauge line running south from Brod *via* Sarajevo to Gravosa, though of course this economic loss would be partly compensated for by the saving in the construction costs of the new line.

Accepting the fact that both routes are practicable, and that the cost would be about the same, it must be admitted that the national interests of the Yugoslav state would be served better by the Spalato line than by the Cattaro line. Not only do the potentially rich central valleys of Bosnia, with their forests and their mines of coal, iron, copper, and salt, stand in need of economic development, but it is of importance that they be brought into easy contact with the capital. The sentimental factor is even more important. The choice of the Cattaro route would be looked on in Croatia as a victory for the Serbians,

while the Spalato route would serve to bind more closely together the different Yugoslav territories and would be considered a compromise between the wishes of extremists on both sides. And compromise is what the Yugoslavs need in their internal affairs.

That these arguments have counted in Belgrade, and that Spalato is already looked on there as the future chief port of Jugoslavia, is indicated by the preferential rail tariffs recently granted her over the angry protests of Susak. The distance from Zagreb to Spalato is about 150 kilometers longer than from Zagreb to Susak, yet the freight rates are identical. Moreover, Spalato, lying further south, is nearly a day's voyage nearer the Mediterranean and transatlantic destinations of most of Jugoslavia's ocean freight. It is easy to see, then, that shippers prefer to use Spalato rather than Susak—except in the case of lumber shipments, which Baros Basin is particularly well equipped to handle. Spalato thus becomes gradually richer and more efficient, better able, in other words, to improve its equipment in preparation for the day when it will be connected more directly with the rich hinterland and take its place as a principal Mediterranean port. This day is not yet at hand, as the Yugoslav government shows no great desire for an important foreign loan under present conditions. But while useful bits of preliminary rail-

way construction are under way the main task is being carefully studied, so that when the moment is favorable, politically and economically, the work can be financed and pushed forward rapidly.

Whether Spalato or Cattaro be ultimately chosen as the terminus, the construction of the Adriatic railway will affect not merely the fortunes of Yugoslavia, but also those of all central Europe. Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Hungary all have exportable grain surpluses in normal years—the maize, wheat, and other cereals exported from Yugoslavia alone totaled 1,254,740 tons in 1925. As the new eastern grain provinces of Poland increase in productivity the dependence of Austria and southern Germany on the wheat of the lower Danube will tend to diminish. Only by a direct export route to the Adriatic can the produce of the magnificently fertile Danube basin compete in the Mediterranean with the sea-borne grain of Russia.

CHAPTER V

THE FUTURE OF ALBANIA

WHATEVER sense of national unity pervades the proud but destitute inhabitants of the stony mountains, malarial coastal marshes, and baked river beds of Albania has sprung from the necessity of their struggling continually to keep out invaders who would annex this or that district, rather than from strong racial, religious, or cultural bonds. In Albania, indeed, such bonds are far from binding, as is shown by the wars between tribes and sects which have usually been in progress whenever some external danger has not compelled them momentarily to close their ranks. The history of the Albanian tribes since they ceased to be under Turkish rule does indeed seem to authorize them to look on every neighbor as a probable enemy and on the promises of the great European chancelleries as worthless even before uttered. Nevertheless, it was this feeling of insecurity which kept them isolated through the Great War and hence resulted in their emerging from the confusion of the first years of peace more consolidated than ever be-

fore, and with a more recognized place as a national entity.

In 1467 died Skanderbeg, the first and last national hero of the Albanians, and with his death all the population—Ghegs in the north, principally Roman Catholic, and Tosks in the south, principally Orthodox—were subdued to Ottoman arms. In the mountain fastnesses of the interior the rule of the Porte was little more than nominal, and here Christianity retained a following, but in other districts the Albanians usually preferred their property and their arms to their religion, and turned Mohammedan.¹ They served in the Turkish armies and often obtained administrative posts of influence, a fact which did not endear them to the Sultan's other more unwilling subjects. But though held in especial esteem at Constantinople, they never suffered Turkish rule entirely gladly, and their meager history during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries tells of a number of sporadic local revolts against the resident pashas.

The beginning of "modern times" in the Balkan peninsula, marked by the successful revolutions of the Serbs and Greeks, awakened in the Albanian

¹ To-day in northern Albania the Mohammedans (mostly Sunnite) outnumber the Roman Catholics about two to one, and in the south the Mohammedans (mostly Bektashite) outnumber the Orthodox in about the same ratio.

mountaineers a sort of national spirit that was compounded partly of the desire to emulate the great deeds that were being done around them, partly of envy and fear. The latter feelings increased as the new states and Montenegro (which had never really lost its independence) tended to edge into territory inhabited by tribes of Albanian blood. In consequence of this, and also because one of their customary pursuits had been to fight in the armies of the Sultan, the Albanians found themselves out of sympathy with the course of events that was inevitably leading, sooner or later, to the break-up of the Turkish Empire in Europe. Thus it happened that the Albanian spirit which was fomented after 1878 by the "League for the Defense of Albanian Nationality" was never thoroughly anti-Turk, the leaders abroad as well as at home feeling that the early dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, before education had made possible a self-conscious and self-reliant Albanian nationalism, would mean mere inter-tribal strife and the absorption of Albanian territories by neighboring states. Albanian patriots, therefore, worked for autonomy rather than independence. Even after 1908, when the Young Turks withdrew the traditional Albanian privileges of exemption from taxation and military service, the Albanians were too afraid of the ambi-

tions of the rising young states to take part in their preparations against the tottering Ottoman citadel.

When the Balkan League finally began hostilities against Turkey in the fall of 1912 a Montenegrin army attacked the Turkish forces in northern Albania and set siege to Scutari, while Serbian troops, after sweeping aside the resistance of the Albanian colonies planted by the Turks in Old Serbia after the Treaty of Berlin, and defeating a principal Turkish army at Kumonovo, captured Monastir. One body of Serb troops then turned north and west and effected a junction with the Montenegrins. Meantime, in the south the Greeks occupied Koritza and besieged Janina. Albanian leaders found their hands forced by these unexpected and rapid successes of the Balkan allies, and Ismail Kemal Bey, an old Albanian leader who long had been on good terms with the Porte, went from Constantinople to Vienna, made sure of the backing of Count Berchtold, and proceeded to call a meeting of Albanian chiefs at Valona. There, on November 28, 1912, for want of any other possible course, was proclaimed the independence of Albania.

From the first the Albanian infant state was treated as a foundling. Both Austria and Italy were anxious to take some advantage of its helplessness and the confusion resulting from its uncertain antecedents. An outright partitionment of its patrimony

might have suited them both, each naturally expecting to secure a share, but for the fact that neither cared to see the Balkan states aggrandized (especially to have Serbia secure an Adriatic outlet, which could hardly be prevented if Albania were divided up), while Austria in particular was far from willing that Valona, with its fine harbor, should fall to Italy, who would thus acquire control of both shores of the Adriatic—here only sixty miles wide—and be thenceforth in a position to stopper up the Austrian fleet whenever she wished. The conflict of interest had been summed up plainly by Signor Tittoni as far back as May 14, 1904, when in a speech in the Italian Parliament he said: “Albania in itself is not of great importance. Its real value consists in its ports and its coast, the possession of which for either Austria-Hungary or Italy would signify incontestable supremacy in the Adriatic.”

When peace negotiations between Turkey and the Balkan allies opened in London on December 17 one of the first acts of the Great Powers was to agree on Albanian autonomy. Albania, it was announced, would be neutralized, and would remain under the protection of the Great Powers and subject to an International Commission of Control. This was about the only thing agreed upon before the peace negotiations were broken off and the Balkan armies returned

to the attack. Again they were everywhere victorious. On March 28 the Powers commanded that hostilities should cease, and sent warships to Antivari to carry out their decision that the Montenegrins must raise the siege of Scutari and that the Serbs must retire from Albanian territory. The Montenegrins replied promptly by a final and successful assault on the town, which had been defended by an Albanian, Essad Pasha, since the death of the Turkish commander.¹ A few weeks later, however, troops were landed under a British officer and the Montenegrins were forced to give up the fruits of their victories. The Serbs had meanwhile obeyed the joint note of the Powers and had evacuated most of the Albanian territory.

Ismail's government still maintained itself precariously at Valona; Essad Pasha now set up a separate government at Durazzo; and an international régime existed at Scutari. Albanian independence had been proclaimed, but a state that had been called arbitrarily into existence, that had three regional governments, no recognized frontiers, and ambitious neighbors, did not seem really to have traveled very far beyond the point when it had been contemptuously referred to as a mere "geographical ex-

¹ Many believe that Essad sold out to the Montenegrins, and that the final attack was a sham.

pression." Nor did events give cause for optimism. International commissions had been appointed to delimit the Albanian frontiers, but without waiting for such details to be settled the Council of Ambassadors, on July 29, 1913, recognized the independence of the territory falling within the projected boundaries, and it soon became known that they intended choosing a foreign prince as ruler. On February 21, 1914, a delegation headed by Essad Pasha offered the Albanian crown to a prince who had been agreed upon by the Powers because he suited none of them—William of Wied. On



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March 7 Prince William arrived on an Austrian yacht and formed a Cabinet in which Essad Pasha was Minister of the Interior and Minister of War. From the start the Prince, hailed as "Mpret," the Albanian term for "Emperor," found himself in an unhappy

position. The Powers were engaged in rival intrigues and did not support him, in the south hostilities between the Greeks and Albanians continued, while his mainstay, Essad, began to be accused of being pro-Italian. Whether because they believed this accusation, or merely because they wished to believe it, the Austrians seem to have given encouragement and arms to Essad's opponents; and when the Prince lost confidence in Essad the Austrians arrested him and took him aboard one of their warships and later sent him to Italy. Essad's partisans thereupon turned on their "Mpret." On September 4, less than six months after his arrival, he quit Durazzo and left his unwilling subjects in favor of service in the German army.

As may be imagined, the Powers by this time had found more important things to occupy them than the disputes of the Albanian clans, and during the next few years the future of the princeless principality entered into their calculations only in so far as it might serve as a prize to be promised some friend, or possible friend, and withheld from some enemy. However the war turned out, Albania seemed certain to lose. Austria-Hungary, influenced by Count Tisza's resolution not to increase further the Slav elements in the Dual Monarchy for fear of creating fresh pressure to transform "dualism" into "trialism," agreed

with Germany (according to Ludendorff's account of a meeting at Kreuznach on May 18, 1917) that the peace terms of the Central Empires should include the following: "A new small Serbia, without harbors, the restoration of Montenegro (without Mount Lovchen) and northern Albania, all three states to be militarily, politically, and economically dependent on Austria-Hungary." That Bulgaria expected part of Albania in order to make herself into an Adriatic state had been shown by her demands on Greece and Serbia in 1914. The future of Albania, therefore, in case of victory by the Central Empires, was dark. But Albanian patriots were not wrong in fearing even more keenly what might happen as a result of victory by the Allies, as the publication of the terms of the Pact of London was eventually to show. This treaty set aside the central part of Albania as an "independent" national state, but implied that the north and south were to be divided between Montenegro, Serbia, and Greece, while Italy was given full sovereignty over Valona, the nearby island of Sasseno, and surrounding territory. The use of the word "independent" for even the shadowy small state that was envisaged was a farce, as Italy reserved the right to represent it in all its foreign relations. In the autumn of 1914 Italy, though a neutral, had already occupied Valona and Sasseno; Austro-Hungarian

armies later took control of all the central and northern regions; while in the south the French, aiming to keep open the road from Santa Quaranta through Koritza to Saloniki, had established a series of strong garrisons.

Such was the line-up in Albania before the final victories of the Allied troops on the Saloniki front, the Bulgarian armistice, the rapid pursuit of the Hapsburg armies northward across the Danube, the eventual dispersal of what Austrian troops still clung to northern Albania, and the occupation of Scutari by Serbia until the arrival of an Inter-Allied force under French command.

After the war, the Albanian spokesmen who appeared at the Paris Peace Conference secured promises for the continued territorial integrity of their country. This was no mean feat. The Pact of London, though partially discredited by President Wilson's refusal to consider it binding, still retained the prestige of having been signed by three of the victorious Great Powers. In the north many Jugoslavs still had their eyes on Scutari (which had just slipped through their hands on the eve of the war) as a convenient Adriatic terminus of a projected railway westward out of Old Serbia; in the south Greece claimed northern Epirus, the scene of so many Græco-Albanian clashes, and gave their statistics a show of

reality by setting down as Greeks all the inhabitants of that area belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church; and Italy's troops still garrisoned Valona and gave no hint of being willing to depart. While the Albanian question was hanging fire, in so far as its consideration on its own merits was concerned, it was introduced into the center of one of the most bitter controversies of the Peace Conference by the suggestion that Italy might be given sovereignty over Valona and a Mandate over all Albania in return for modifying her claim to Fiume. In the December 9, 1919, memorandum signed by M. Clemenceau, Mr. Frank Polk, and Sir Eyre A. Crowe, such a proposal had definitely been made to the Italian government.¹ Signor Nitti in reply reiterated the Italian demand for the fulfillment of the Pact of London, and requested a number of concessions beyond those already proposed by the French, American, and British delegates. Talk was now heard of giving Scutari outright to Yugoslavia in order to persuade her not to object to these further concessions. Dr. Trumbitch, himself a Dalmatian, discouraged such a course; but, as already described, it nevertheless formed the basis of the new propositions handed him by M. Clemenceau on January 14. (Mr. Polk had meanwhile returned to Washington.) Yugoslavia was told that her frontiers with Albania

¹ Cf. Chapter III.

would be altered, and that all northern Albania would be constituted an autonomous province under her direction, the imputation being that she could annex it outright in the course of time. Greece was to be given Koritza and certain other southern districts. Italy was to retain Valona and have a mandate over the portion of Albania not parceled out to Jugoslavia and Greece. It is to the credit of Dr. Trumbitch that in his reply to these propositions he said that his government must again remark, "*comme elle l'a fait dès le début*," that it preferred to see Albania retain the frontiers given it by the Conference of Ambassadors in 1913, with a local autonomous government free from the interference of any foreign power. He added that if this solution were not adopted, and if Albanian territories were definitely to be distributed among other states, he reserved the rights of Jugoslavia therein. He might have added that even in the Jugoslav memorandum presented at Paris in the first days of the Conference no demand was made for admittedly Albanian territory except on the same "contingent basis."

At this point President Wilson re-entered the scene with his inquiry from Washington as to whether the Allies intended disposing of the Adriatic matter without considering the views of the United States. On learning the details of the proposed settlement, and

the further fact that the Jugoslavs were being threatened with the integral application of the Pact of London if they refused to accept, the President telegraphed that he could not "believe that a solution containing provisions which have already received the well-merited condemnation of the French and British governments can in any sense be considered right," and with specific reference to Albania said: "The memorandum of December 9 maintained in large measure the unity of the Albanian state. That of January 14 partitions the Albanian people, against their vehement protests, amongst three different alien Powers." Later he summed up his standpoint as follows: "The President must reaffirm that he cannot possibly approve any plan which assigns to Jugoslavia in the northern districts of Albania territorial compensation for what she is deprived of elsewhere." The French and British governments thereupon allowed the Fiume question to relapse into direct negotiation between Italy and Jugoslavia. We are not concerned here with those *pourparlers* except to point out that in the resulting Treaty of Rapallo Albania was not mentioned. President Wilson had secured that the settlement, such as it was, was made without sacrificing the interests of a third party.

Italian troops had meanwhile been engaging in sporadic fighting in the Valona hinterland. As these

engagements had not gone in their favor, and as serious social and political problems were pressing more and more insistently for settlement at home, the Italian government decided on the evacuation of all Albania except for a garrison on the island of Sasseto, and in the fall of 1920 appointed a High Commissioner, thus extending *de facto* recognition to the Tirana government. The seal of full recognition was set by the admission of Albania as a member of the League of Nations on December 17 of that year. It remained to delimit definitely the frontiers of the state. They were finally fixed by the Conference of Ambassadors (November 9, 1921),¹ after repeated frontier incidents between Albanians and Jugoslavs had led to an Albanian appeal to the League of Nations and the forced retirement of both parties from a neutral zone of demarcation. A Commission of Inquiry had in the meantime been sent out by the League. As a result of its report, dated April 19, 1922, a financial adviser was appointed by the League to assist the Albanian government in its work of economic reconstruction.

Economic progress is greatly hindered in Albania by the lack of all the usual equipment, notably by the absence of railways and the scarcity of roads—the total length of the roads being not more than 500

¹ The formal act was not signed, however, until July 31, 1926, at Paris.

kilometers.¹ The budgets for recent years have not usually balanced, but the deficits have not been great and the revenue of the state should increase with the improvement of agricultural conditions and the exploitation of forest and mineral wealth, provided the latter is properly undertaken and not left to unscrupulous foreign concessionaires. The trade balance remains adverse, but only by 8,000,000 gold francs in 1924; and exports are continually rising. It is interesting, incidentally, to note that the transatlantic export trade has assumed considerable proportions. Out of the total 1924 exports, valued at 12,379,510 gold francs, goods to the value of 2,255,555 gold francs went to the United States, chiefly in the form of fruit, jam, butter, and cheese. Italy, however, is Albania's chief customer. She takes over half of Albania's exports and sends her over three-quarters of her imports.

The internal situation has gradually become more clear cut. In 1924 the Tirana government, having succeeded in overcoming the rival claims of various local chieftains and foreign protégés (notably the so-called Kossovo Committee, which played alternately with Rome, Moscow, Montenegrin separatists and Macedonian *komitadjis*), came under the control of Mgr. Fan Noli, an Orthodox priest, educated at Har-

¹ Some roads are under construction at the present time, notably one over the mountains *via* Turgus to Lake Ochrida, in Jugoslavia.

vard, who had represented in the Albanian Assembly the point of view of the Albanians living in America. Fan Noli incurred the dislike of the land-owning beys of the south through his plans for remedying the laws of land tenure, and lost popularity generally because of his reliance on Italian counsel and because he permitted the strengthening of Italy's hold on Albanian economics and finance. Eventually a former Prime Minister, Ahmed Bey Zogu, returned to Tirana on the wings of a revolution which he engineered from his refuge on Yugoslav soil. There seems little doubt that his return to power was looked on with favor in Belgrade, but his subsequent course of action even at first was not markedly pro-Yugoslav, nor did the Italian and Yugoslav agreement not to intervene while the success of his *coup d'état* was hanging in the balance indicate that Italy looked on him as belonging to a wholly hostile faction.

On his election as President by the Constituent Assembly (January, 1925), Ahmed Bey Zogu lost no time in consolidating his position. The constitution which he had Parliament adopt six weeks later provided for a Senate with 18 members, 12 of them elected and 6 appointed by the President, and a Chamber with about 60 elected members. But this Parliament exercises little authority. The President retains the right of veto, without appeal; the right

of decreeing new elections in case the Chamber refuses to give the Cabinet a vote of confidence or in case of disagreement between Senate and Chamber; the right of applying for another year the old budget in case Parliament does not vote a new one; and the sole right of initiating changes in the constitution.

The only way in which Ahmed Zogu might be said to have shown partiality for Jugoslavia has been in meeting that country's view regarding the ownership of the monastery of St. Naoum, lying on the Yugoslav-Albanian frontier, on the shores of Lake Ochrida. But St. Naoum was a small price to pay for more friendly relations with so close and powerful a neighbor, and it has been more than offset by the economic and financial concessions which, willy-nilly, Ahmed Zogu has found himself forced to make to Italy. Profiting by the fact that the necessary moneys for current Albanian expenses were not forthcoming elsewhere, Italy, though a borrower in foreign markets, permitted herself the luxury of a series of advances to Tirana which have given her an unrivaled advantage there. The Albanian National Bank is an Italian creation, the Albanian state monopolies are in Italian hands, and a great part of Albania's forest and mineral wealth has been reserved for the exploitation of Italian companies. The danger, of course, is that Ahmed Zogu's reliance on Italy, however unwilling,

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may make him unpopular and that another overturn may send him packing into exile on the heels of his clerical predecessor. But there would probably be this difference, that Italian troops would now have to come in to protect Italy's new and very extensive interests, and that Europe would wake up to find Italy again installed in force on the eastern coast of the Adriatic. Many would interpret such a move as a Balkan danger signal of the most perturbing sort.

It must be said, however, that as yet there have been no signs of Ahmed Zogu's losing his hold on his countrymen. And it may be argued that the longer he maintains himself, the better is he able to balk suggestions for a new division of Albanian territory, should such be made. It is not likely, for example, that any state at the present time would repeat the Italian "feelers" put out to Yugoslavia three or four years ago to reopen negotiations for the division of Albania along the lines rejected by President Wilson and Dr. Trumbitch in 1920. (According to the new plan, Greece, who momentarily had fallen from Italian grace, was not to profit by the division. Moreover, Italy was to sanction Yugoslavia's seizure of the Greek port of Saloniki. All reasonable Yugoslav statesmen supported the refusal of Foreign Minister Nintchitch to entertain any such propositions.)

As a matter of fact, a case for the partitionment of

Albania has often been made out, and not merely by propagandists for one or other of the possible beneficiaries. In 1917 Dr. Rizoff, then Bulgarian minister at Berlin, published an argument for assigning southern Albania to Greece, northeastern Albania to Serbia, and constituting the central portion, which is chiefly Mohammedan, into a neutral autonomous state. It may be argued that only thus can be met the designs of other powers who wish to make Albania a bridge to the Balkans, and whose advent there would be the inevitable signal for fresh hostilities. Others, seeking a way of continuing Albanian independence, have favored some sort of tribal confederation. Advocates of this plan foresee a continued reluctance on the part of the various Albanian tribes to submit for long to the authority of a central government, and draw a parallel, which is hardly justified by the facts, between the success of the Swiss Confederation and the success which they hope would attend the introduction of a similar arrangement in Albania. Another way of avoiding partitionment might be to incorporate Albania as a unit in the federation between Jugoslavia and Bulgaria which may some day solve another of the major problems of the Balkans. In the only conditions under which a Jugoslav-Bulgar confederation could conceivably be formed, such wide local autonomy would necessarily

be left each component region that Albania, were she to join, would not need to fear losing her separate identity. But in any plan to avoid partitionment the primary requisite is for the existence of a generally accepted Albanian government, functioning in a fixed capital in accordance with a more or less fixed constitution and legal code, and possessing representatives abroad able to state their country's case and able to take advantage of the valuable forum opened to them in Geneva. On all these counts progress has been made in the last two or three years.

The Albanian problem of to-day, then, is something very different from what European statesmen knew fifteen years ago. Then the sole alternatives facing the turbulent conglomeration of Albanian tribes seemed to be continued exploitation by this Power or that for its own selfish ends, or else frank partitionment between the neighboring states. To-day the future of the sovereign state of Albania is still highly uncertain, but one would be rash to say that its continuance as a separate national entity was improbable. In a general way, of course, its fate is bound up closely with the fate of the new international structure centering about the League of Nations. More specifically, it depends on whether the Albanians can preserve domestic peace, thus excluding one excuse for foreign intervention, and whether they can—with-

out the undue participation of foreign interests—bring forward education and the arts of civilization rapidly enough to give some measure of stability to their country's economic life. But in any case, from being a mute geographical expression Albania has become a political factor in its own right, with a voice of its own and with a world forum where it has already found that it does not appeal in vain for attention. This is to be counted a great gain, obscurity and shadow having in the past contributed largely to keeping Albania one of the chief problems of Balkan peace.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNREDEEMED ISLES OF GREECE

TWO questions in which Greece has long been concerned have developed in the last year or so in a manner not at all in accord with her national aspirations. Cyprus, toward which she has cast longing eyes ever since she became an independent nation, was proclaimed a British Crown Colony on May 1, 1925. The annexation by Italy of Rhodes and the other Greek islands of the Dodecanese has meanwhile been discussed in the Italian press in a manner to remove any idea that Italy might be considering ending her occupation, begun in 1912 as a professedly temporary and conditional measure; and though no formal decree of annexation has yet been issued, there can be no doubt about the implications of a speech by Signor Mussolini in September of 1924, in which he declared the year notable because it had begun with an Italian Fiume, continued with an Italian Jubaland, and would end with an Italian Rhodes.

THE DODECANESE

The term Dodecanese—meaning the “Twelve Islands,” used rather loosely of a scattered group

of islands along the eastern shores of the Ægean—was not often heard until it became associated with one of the acts of Italy in the Tripolitan War against Turkey in 1911-12. But the names of many of the individual islands in the group are familiar, especially Rhodes, which has played a rôle of its own in the world since the gray days of earliest Mediterranean history; Kos, with the great plane tree of the physician Hippocrates and the sanctuary where many principles of scientific medicine were discovered and tabulated; and Patmos, where in a cavern St. John saw his heavenly vision and wrote his account thereof. The other islands include Kasos, Karpathos, Kharki, Tilos, Symi, with its venerable shrine, Nisyros, Astropalia, Kalymnos, Lipsos, and Leros, besides innumerable adjoining islets, mostly uninhabited.

The whole population of the Dodecanese to-day is not over 100,000, of whom less than a tenth are Turks, the rest being practically all Greeks. Even these figures do not show how completely Greek the islands are, as all but a few hundred of the Turkish population are found on the island of Rhodes and even there they are outnumbered four to one by the Greeks. None of the islands are any longer of much economic importance, sponge-fishing being the occupation of such of the inhabitants as are not content

merely to raise enough produce for their scanty personal needs.

But in ancient times the Twelve Islands were many of them rich and powerful. Because of its size Rhodes was always the chief. Its affluent trade permitted it to develop a guardian fleet and to establish the internal order and security which are the usual concomitants of successful commerce. Nor was it behindhand in the arts; the fame of its writers (among them the poet Apollonius) and of its scientists spread far and wide. Despite lying so close to the shores of Asia Minor, and despite the fact that before Rome's advent into the eastern Mediterranean it controlled a mainland empire of considerable extent, Rhodes, standing on the crossing sea routes from Saloniki, Athens, and the Straits to Alexandria, Antioch, and the Levant, resolutely turned its face (down to the time of the Turkish conquest) more to the west than to the east. In the Mithradatic Wars the island sided with Rome against the mainland; when the Venetians began sending their galleys to the Ægean they found the merchants of Rhodes adaptable customers and solicitous of western good will; and during the two centuries when the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem were standing guard over Rhodes against the oncoming wave of Ottoman conquest it was the west in which its merchants trusted and the east which they

feared. It will be recalled that when the Knights were driven out of Syria, literally into the sea, they turned to Rhodes and the neighboring islands (A.D. 1308) and succeeded in maintaining themselves there even after the fall of Constantinople in 1453; but



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in 1502 they were forced to evacuate, leaving little but a name behind. Rhodes became the headquarters of a Turkish pasha.

The attainment of Greek independence in 1826 was the signal for a change in the attitude of the Ottoman rulers toward the Greek populations still remaining under their dominion. In place of the semi-

autonomy which the Dodecanese had long enjoyed, a more exacting régime was inaugurated, the more irksome to the islanders in that they had joined heartily in the war for freedom and had seen the prize within their grasp. But it was not to be. When Greece secured her independence the important island of Eubœa had remained in Turkish hands. So serious was the menace of this Turkish outpost close to the heart of Greece that an agreement was reached, with the approval of the three "Protecting Powers," to trade Samos and the Dodecanese for Eubœa. Thus the Dodecanesians who had joined the fleet of Admiral Miaoulis, and whose services had at first been rewarded by the welcome annexation of their islands by the Provisional Greek Government, found themselves sacrificed to an imperative national need. By way of partial compensation the "Protecting Powers" undertook to guarantee the islanders' local rights and privileges; but once the matter had been settled they forgot it as speedily as circumstances permitted.

The memory of how close they came early in the last century to union with the main body of their countrymen has not made the people of the islands more patient or contented with alien rule in the interval. The Young Turk revolution of 1908 was at first hailed in the Greek regions of the Ottoman Empire, as elsewhere, as the dawn of a better day, but

hopes gave way to disillusionment, and as taxation increased and drafts for service in the Turkish army multiplied, the only resource for the islanders seemed to be emigration. Thousands of them emigrated to Mediterranean seaports and to the United States.

On the top of this came a severe and unexpected check to the Greek Irredentist movement. In 1911 Italy, being at war with Turkey in North Africa, seized the Dodecanese, at the same time proclaiming that her occupation was "temporary" and saying that the islands should be self-governing. In the treaty of peace which ceded Libya to Italy the Italian government agreed to hand the islands back to Turkey as soon as the Turkish evacuation of Libya had taken place. But the conclusion of the Italo-Turkish War was followed immediately by the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, and when Greece came to occupy the Greek islands remaining under Turkish sovereignty she found Italy still hanging on in the Dodecanese and so was prevented from including them with the rest. This stroke of ill fortune was followed by another quite similar. Italy having prolonged her occupation throughout the Balkan Wars and the brief period of peace which ensued, the outbreak of the Great War found her still in possession, and the islands became part of the grandiose rewards which she demanded and was promised by the secret Pact

of London as her price for throwing in her lot with the Entente Powers. It may be permitted to point out in passing that the Powers involved in this deal were the same "Protecting Powers" which early in the preceding century had guaranteed the privileges of the islanders.

The natural unpopularity of the Italian occupation was accentuated by the inevitable hardships of war time, nor has it been diminished by neglect of the local privileges that had persisted even under recent Ottoman rule and by restrictions on travel between the various islands. In an interesting address before the Royal Geographical Society while the Peace Conference was still in session Professor J. L. Myres reported a conversation which he had recently had with a Kalymniote "of great esteem and experience." To a question as to why the Italian régime was provoking such bitter discontent, the Greek replied: "The Turks had a bad system, but it did not work, and we got on fairly well. The Italians have taken the Turkish system and made it work." Nor have the Italian administrators shown much sense of proportion, as is indicated by a small incident that occurred in 1921. In that year the Greek Archbishop of Rhodes and several of his clergy were arrested and deported because they failed to attend the public festivities in honor of the Italian Crown Prince. The action of

the archbishop may have been rude and futile; but it was no more futile than the attempt to make an alien rule acceptable to a stubborn and patriotic population by punishing whoever does not cry hurrah on order.

On August 10, 1920, was signed the Treaty of Sèvres, the authors of which were under the illusion that they were settling the Turkish question. The text of this abortive treaty gave Italy the Dodecanese and the detached island of Castellorizo, but a separate protocol signed by Tittoni and Venizelos promised that the islands (excluding Castellorizo) should be transferred to Greece in compensation for the latter's withdrawal of her objections to certain Italian plans on the mainland of Asia Minor. This separate agreement bound Italy to make the transfer forthwith, and indeed for a time Dodecanesian passports were available "until the cession to Greece." An exception was made of Rhodes, which Tittoni and Venizelos agreed was to go to Greece, should a plebiscite so decide, fifteen years after the (problematical) cession of Cyprus to Greece by Great Britain. But the Italian occupation of all the islands continued, and on October 8, 1922, the Italian government denounced the special arrangement negotiated by Tittoni on the grounds that the lapse of the Treaty of Sèvres follow-

ing the Turkish victories in Anatolia released it from observing its pledge.

For a time Great Britain protested. For example, in the House of Commons on February 25, 1924, Prime Minister MacDonald spoke as follows: "I find that in concluding with the Italian government the agreement of April, 1920, regarding Jubaland, Lord Milner made a written reservation in the sense that this agreement could only become effective as part of the general settlement of all the issues raised at the Peace Conference. These issues, as the Italian government have often been reminded, embrace the question of the Dodecanese, and the Italian government have for their part recognized that the treaty which they concluded with Greece on August 10, 1920, was the result of agreement among the Allies, and that the settlement of the Dodecanese question is not only the concern of Italy and Greece."¹ But in the end the protests showed themselves to have been based less on any new-born concern for the fate of the Dodecanese, which had been so readily promised to Italy along with a great deal of other territory belonging to third parties who were not consulted, than on a desire to reduce the size of Italian demands for territorial compensations in the British colony of Kenya, across the River Juba from the

¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 170, 1924, pp. 28-29.

Italian colony of Somaliland, based on the thirteenth article of the Pact of London that should Great Britain and France increase their colonial territories in Africa at the expense of Germany, those two Powers would give Italy some equitable compensation. In March, 1924, less than a month after he had pronounced the words quoted above, Mr. MacDonald proposed to Italy that, provided she would accept such-and-such a line in Jubaland, he would cancel Lord Milner's reservation and settle the Jubaland question apart from the question of the Dodecanese, but that if Italy persisted in demanding a more favorable line he would insist on considering the Dodecanese question simultaneously. Having weighed the additional slice of Jubaland desert and swamp against British complaisance toward the maintenance of her hold on the Dodecanese, Italy decided to take the latter, and on July 15 the treaty regarding Jubaland was signed in London by Mr. MacDonald and the Italian ambassador. No mention was made of the Dodecanese. Italy continues to stand on her position that the failure of the Treaty of Sèvres and the signature of the Treaty of Lausanne relieve her from carrying out her arrangement with Greece, and the actions of Rome seem based on the assumption that Italian sovereignty is complete and final. Incidentally, a fortified Italian naval base has been con-

structed at Leros,¹ and another is contemplated for Rhodes, where elaborate municipal buildings are also being built under Italian supervision.

As far back as 1887 Sir Charles Dilke, in his extraordinarily well-informed book, *The Present Position of European Politics*, said of the Greeks: "It is difficult to say whether they more dislike the Austrians or the Italians, and their latest fancy is to declare that not only does Italy covet the Albanian coast, but that she has fixed her view on Rhodes." Time has proved that the forebodings of the Greeks were not unfounded.

CYPRUS

Scant comfort for the failure of their hopes in the Dodecanese can be drawn by proponents of a Greater Hellas from the present case of Cyprus, the large island, over four-fifths Greek, which lies midway between the coast of Syria and the southern shores of Asia Minor.

The descendants of the original settlers of Cyprus have known many masters. At the division of the empire of Alexander the Great, of which it had been part, it fell to Egypt; in 58 B.C. it became a Roman

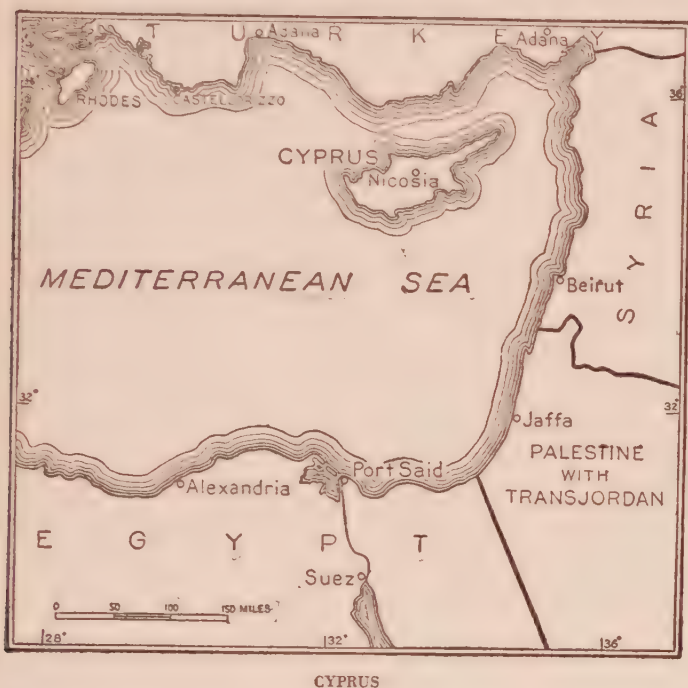
¹ Great Britain may one day be unhappy over the alleged fact that these fortifications by their nature can only be directed against a strong naval Power.

province; and on the division of the Roman Empire it went with Byzantium. Richard Cœur de Lion conquered the island in 1191 and sold it to Guy de Lusignan, whose descendents ruled it until succeeded by Venice in the fifteenth century. The Turks took it from Venice in 1571 and held it for the next three hundred years.

To all intents and purposes June 4, 1878, marks the beginning of the modern history of Cyprus. On that date Great Britain and Turkey signed what was known as the "Cyprus Convention," by which England was to be allowed to occupy Cyprus so long as Russia occupied the Transcaucasian provinces which she had taken from Turkey. This was Disraeli's price for a promise of British aid in case Russia should attempt to extend her rule in Asia beyond the limits fixed by the treaty of peace signed by Russia and Turkey at Constantinople a few months earlier. Almost at once Cyprus was put under the British Colonial Office, but was always recognized officially as forming part of the Ottoman Empire. This anomalous situation continued until the outbreak of the Great War. On November 5, 1914, an Order in Council declared void the Turco-British convention of 1878 and proclaimed Cyprus's annexation. By the terms of this and other documents all Ottoman subjects resident in Cyprus on November 5, 1914,

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became subjects of Great Britain, except that any Ottoman subject who wished might retain his nationality, provided he left the island within two months. Only a few persons took advantage of this latter provision.



A census taken in 1921 showed the population to be 310,709, of whom only approximately one-fifth were Mohammedans (tantamount, for practical purposes, to defining them as Turks, though many of the so-called "Turks" in the Greek islands are often

almost as Greek in blood as the "Greeks," being descended from converts), while the rest were almost all Orthodox Christians (*i.e.*, Greeks). In November of that year some 3,000 Armenian refugees arrived in Cyprus from Mersina, and a few hundred Greek refugees from Asia Minor were received in 1922. But although the country is fertile and underpopulated, the British government has refrained from allowing to settle there any part of the great horde of Greek refugees and exchanged Greeks who have all but swamped the cities and countryside of Greece proper. In view of the admitted inadequacy of the population of Cyprus—"its sparseness is one of the causes of the slow rate of progress," wrote the Nicosia correspondent of *The Near East*, of London, on May 26, 1926—the exclusion of Greek refugees can only be accounted for by the unwillingness of the British government further to increase the predominantly Greek character of the island.

The four-fifths of the population who are Greeks have never hidden their desire for union with Greece, and deputations have often visited London to plead their cause. The Turkish minority, however, naturally prefer to remain under Britain. The proclamation of Cyprus as a Crown Colony, which took place at Nicosia on May 1, 1925, was received with dismay by the Greek Cypriots, who realized that it placed

still further beyond their reach the goal of their nationalistic aspirations. After the reading of the proclamation, which took place in the public square in the presence of the heads of governmental departments and detachments of British troops, the Greek archbishop, Kyrillos, handed the High Commissioner a protest addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies expressing the regret of the Greek population at this denial of their "ethnic rights." To this the Secretary of State for the Colonies replied on June 12 that "you must clearly understand that, as has already been pointed out to you on more than one occasion, the question of the union of Cyprus with Greece has been finally closed and cannot be reopened." Petitions and memorials continue to be presented, however. To the latest of these, drawn up by the Greek members of the island's Legislative Council, the Secretary of State for the Colonies replied in March, 1926, informing them once again of the British government's refusal to reopen the question of union with Greece, and stating that he observed with surprise and regret that they regarded so lightly their oath of loyalty to the King, which was taken by each of them at the opening of the Legislative Council on November 6, 1925; and he added, in reply to their request for wider measures of self-gov-

ernment, that he did not consider them in the stage of development to deserve it.

At the time of the proclamation of the Crown Colony it was announced that the representation of the non-Moslem population in the Legislative Council was to be increased by three. The Council having been composed of nine Greek and three Mohammedan elected members, and six named by the High Commissioner, the Greek population would in that case have exercised a preponderant influence within the Assembly's rather limited field of competence. It soon developed, however, that the three new Greek members were to be counterbalanced by the addition of three British. As the governor has a casting vote, the Greek members remain, as before, effectually checkmated. Once or twice recently there have been efforts to promote co-operation between the Greek members and the Turks, who in the past have invariably voted with the British. But it seems extremely unlikely of fulfillment, as the Greek members have announced their intention of keeping alive outside the Council room their campaign for union with Greece, while the Moslems, seeing that there is no possibility of the island being returned to Turkey, prefer that no administrative change should occur.

One matter which sooner or later must come up for adjustment has to do with the £50,000 which

Great Britain has been contributing annually toward the £92,000 charged each year against Cyprus for the benefit of the share-holders of the Ottoman loan of 1855. The Cyprus Treasury has always had to make up the balance, £42,000. Local agitation for Cyprus to be relieved of this annual tribute, which has kept the island impoverished and which has prevented the development of public works, has received some support in England, but on May 11, 1925, the Under-Secretary of the Colonial Office announced in the House of Commons, in reply to a question, that no changes were contemplated in the existing financial arrangements of Cyprus.

To Greece the question of Cyprus is primarily one of racial sentiment, though the island's material resources and the field it offers for the surplus Greek population are of course not lost sight of. It also has an important bearing on the fate of Rhodes, and indirectly of the other islands of the Dodecanese, as noted above.

To Great Britain the importance of Cyprus is twofold—economic and strategic. Taking the first of these considerations, we find that the agricultural produce of the island includes raisins, fruit, wine, cotton and wheat, while its mineral reserves include asbestos, copper, chrome, etc. (The Cyprus Asbestos Company, a British concern capitalized at £600,000,

has recently been installing new plants and machinery.) In 1924 the exports of Cyprus reached a value of £1,231,703, while imports amounted to £1,243,356. In other words, the balance of trade was within £13,000 of equilibrium. Economic conditions are far from satisfactory, however, and in 1925 the imports exceeded the exports by over £431,000. Of the 1924 exports about 25 per cent went to markets within the British Empire, while 40 per cent of the imports were of British origin.

From the strategic point of view Cyprus has lost some of its importance for England. It is true that British strategists must now pay attention to the Italian theory that the Mediterranean is a Latin lake, and this perhaps accounts for the statement, so far undenied, that a modern harbor is to be constructed, "for Imperial purposes," at the small port of Famagusta. On the other hand, not only is the fear of Russian predominance in Asia Minor which led to the 1878 agreement no longer a factor, but the experience with submarines in the Mediterranean during the Great War showed that the Suez Canal was much less useful as a means of Imperial communication than it had been usually considered—and hence that Cyprus and Malta had also been over-rated. It has often been pointed out that Cyprus, like other islands claimed by Greece but held by other Powers, could

readily be neutralized before being transferred to Greek sovereignty, as was done with the Ionian Islands in 1864. That strategic considerations are no longer really vital is shown by the fact that in 1915 Cyprus was held out to Greece as one of her rewards if she would make common cause with the Allies. Subsequently, Great Britain promised France (who was alarmed at the growth of Greek power in the Mediterranean) not to cede the island without first obtaining the French government's consent. But to-day Greek fortunes are at a much lower ebb than they were ten years ago, and Paris would hardly offer objections if the British nation decided, in the words of Professor Toynbee, "to follow in Cyprus their own example in the Ionian Islands and the American example in Cuba, and to withdraw after arranging that the rights of the Turkish minority should be secured."

CHAPTER VII

THE SALONIKI DISPUTE

SALONIKI is the port of all the valleys and highlands of central and southern Serbia, which find their shortest access to the outside world southward through the gorges of the Vardar; by the same token it is the *raison d'être* of that region's only through railway, the line running southward from Belgrade through Nish and Skoplje (the economic center of Macedonia) until it reaches the Ægean at Saloniki. What Fiume used to be to the Danubian plains, what Cattaro and Scutari may sometime be to the valleys now cut off from the Adriatic by the untunneled walls of the Dinaric Alps, the ancient Greek city of Saloniki must be to all the central Balkan peninsula.

There are two principal aspects of the concern which geography thus forces Yugoslavia to have in Saloniki. She is interested in the port facilities afforded her commerce by the Greek authorities; and she is interested in the administration and functioning of the forty-eight miles of railway lying between Saloniki and the Greek-Yugoslav frontier near Ghevgeli. The local traffic on that bit of railway is

negligible, and will not be of real importance even if the so-called "Vardar Concession" of the Foundation Company results in the draining and irrigation of the malarial Saloniki plain and its settlement by agriculturist refugees from Anatolia. The railway is really valuable to Greece only because over it passes the traffic which makes Saloniki one of the great ports of the Mediterranean basin.

The Ghevgeli-Saloniki railway was part of the *Compagnie d'Exploitation des Chemins de Fer Orientaux*, founded by Baron Hirsch, and later under Austrian and German control. The nucleus of this control was the *Wiener Bank-Verein*, which enjoyed the protection of, and was subject to, the Austrian government. After the Balkan Wars the question of the future control of the Ghevgeli-Saloniki and other Macedonian lines came under discussion, but no decision had been reached at the time the Great War broke out. It was one of the lines requisitioned by Greece in September, 1915, when it became apparent that the Allies would land at Saloniki, and eight months later it was taken over by the Allies and placed under military administration. After the war French speculative interests acquired a controlling interest, and recently have been trying to get bids from both Greece and Jugoslavia. The complex financial questions involved will probably long re-

main the subject of negotiations between Athens and Paris.

As long ago as 1906, when Serbia looked about for new outlets for the trade which was being strangled by the Austrian tariff war, the Turks granted her a lease on part of the harbor at Saloniki, and accorded her the right of free entry and export. Money was spent on warehouses, but Turkish mismanagement of the harbor and constant troubles on the railway more than overbalanced the usefulness of the concessions.

The First Balkan War at last banished the crescent from Macedonia. The Second Balkan War, following a dispute over the division of the territorial spoils and occasioned directly by the night attack of Bulgaria on her two former allies, Serbia and Greece, led to Macedonia's division between the two victorious states. An integral part of the arrangement was the treaty signed in the spring of 1913 between the Kingdom of Greece and the Kingdom of Serbia, containing the following paragraphs:

His Majesty the King of the Hellenes covenants that his government shall grant all the necessary facilities and guaranties for a period of fifty years for the complete freedom of the export and import trade of Serbia through the port of Saloniki and the railway lines from Saloniki to Skoplje and Monastir. This freedom shall be as large as

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possible, provided only it is compatible with the full and entire exercise of Hellenic sovereignty.

A special convention shall be concluded between the two high contracting parties within a year from this day in order to regulate in detail the carrying out of this article. This much disgusted Austria-Hungary, who expressed herself in both Belgrade and Athens as determined to exact for herself privileges similar to any accorded



SALONIKI'S RAILWAY CONNECTIONS

Serbia. As neither capital cared to see Austria acquire the right to participate in discussions over Saloniki, they instructed their delegates in March, 1914, to wind the matter up quickly, and an agreement was initialed *ad referendum* on May 23. This agreement fell far short of Serbia's expectations, for it did not assure entire liberty of transit to her goods,

Article 4 giving Greece the right to maintain state monopolies, to carry out veterinary and sanitary inspections, and to set up bars "in exceptional circumstances." That there were extraneous reasons dictating so wide a divergence from the generous phraseology used in the parent treaty a year before is shown by the addition of a secret protocol by which the Greek government tried to set the matter right by promising in general terms that Serbian commerce should have full freedom. The Great War broke out without ratification having been extended to this agreement by either home government.

After the war the new and enlarged Yugoslav state was as much interested as little Serbia formerly had been in arranging a trade outlet at Saloniki. But she made it plain that she asked consideration less as a favor than as a right. As the Yugoslav minister at Athens, M. Baloudjitch, wrote somewhat later in *Politika* (Belgrade): "It is not a question of concessions, but of the execution of an obligation which is an essential part of our alliance with Greece and which constituted a condition for our recognition of Greek sovereignty over Saloniki. . . ."

To Greece, on the other hand, it seemed particularly necessary to conciliate Yugoslavia. Greek troops had met disaster in Asia Minor in 1922, and Greek statesmen saw also that their country could not hope

to stand alone against Italian nationalistic and commercial ambitions. Progress had also been made in easing Jugoslavia's relations with Italy, and there were rumors that Rome was encouraging Belgrade to look for compensation for the loss of Fiume in the acquisition of Saloniki. As a matter of fact, such propositions, if made, were not accepted. Foreign Minister Nintchitch in Belgrade on June 5, 1922, declared to the writer: "We have not traded Fiume for Saloniki. No accord, on my word of honor, exists between Jugoslavia and Italy regarding Saloniki. If one were offered us I would refuse it. We have the necessary elements for good relations with Greece in the *status quo*." But in any case there were enough good reasons why Greece should want the matter settled, and with this in view the Greek Foreign Minister, Nicolas Politis, visited Belgrade early in November, 1922. On his return the Greek Parliament ratified the pre-war agreement regarding Saloniki. Jugoslavia, however, having found in the course of the war that it was all too possible for Greece to differ with her regarding the interpretation of a treaty, said that the text was not sufficiently explicit and offered inadequate guaranties. From the fresh negotiations which ensued there issued, on May 10, 1923, a new Saloniki convention.

This convention provided that for a period of fifty

years there should be in Saloniki a "Jugoslav Free Zone" of about 94,000 square meters, under Yugoslav administration but subject to Greek law and Greek police supervision. It agreed to recognize goods coming from the frontier to the free zone, and *vice versa*, as "goods in transit," and freed them from tax. Accompanying protocols provided special rates for the carriage of passengers and cattle over the Saloniki-Ghevveli line, stipulated that there should not be more than twelve hours' delay at the border in the case of express and not more than thirty-six hours' in the case of freight, exempted cattle and poultry destined for the Yugoslav zone from inspection and quarantine at the border, etc., etc. Ratifications of the convention were exchanged May 30, 1924, and the free zone actually came into Yugoslav control on March 5, 1925.

In operation the free zone has not fulfilled Yugoslav expectations. The dissatisfaction does not arise over the administration of the zone, but over its inadequate size and over railway delays and failures. As a matter of fact, though the zone is supposed to contain 94,000 square meters, about 40,000 of these lie under water. Exports such as lumber, cement, and grain take a great deal of room, and Yugoslav merchants say they cannot develop their natural trade in these commodities because of insufficient trans-

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shipment and storage facilities. Cattle are difficult to handle in cramped quarters, also, and it is complained that no facilities can be provided for cleaning



PART OF THE PORT OF SALONIKI

The limits of the Jugoslav Free Zone are indicated by a broken line. The Greek Free Zone, surrounding the Jugoslav Free Zone, is shown by a heavy solid line.

cars, etc. Much of the merchandise, to reach the zone's single quay, must pass over turntables, worked by hand and designed for a solitary freight car at a time. A few meters more territory, say the critics,

would enable the Yugoslav government to curve the railway line gently, eliminate the turntables, and save constant delay and expense.

A major drawback in Yugoslav eyes is that a "Greek Free Zone" has been established completely surrounding (by land) the Yugoslav zone; as this larger zone has been leased to a private company for exploitation, the Yugoslav government fears it may have to depend on a third party—and one not necessarily solely Greek—for the maintenance of its rights. The walls of the Greek zone were completed in the early autumn of 1925, and it was formally inaugurated on October 18.

Most important of all, the operation of the railway, on which the success of the whole scheme hangs, was found inefficient and disastrously slow. It is easy enough to see that Greek shipping would benefit by the flow of Serbian trade to Saloniki, and that Greece in general might benefit politically from a friendly understanding and alliance with Jugoslavia. But these arguments were not likely to be perceived by local middlemen (most of them Spanish Jews—in Saloniki before the war there were more Jews than all other nationalities put together), who only saw privileged trade slipping by without their profiting and who did not realize that unless it were privileged it would not come at all; nor by local railway and

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frontier officials, who grumbled at working almost exclusively for foreigners.

As complaints about Saloniki multiplied (there were others, notably regarding Yugoslav minorities in Greek Macedonia), Belgrade made representations to Athens, but was informed that the Greek government considered the Saloniki question closed. The Yugoslav government thereupon took drastic action. The 1913 Græco-Serb Treaty of Alliance was still ostensibly in force, though its formal term had come to an end and it was supposed to remain in vigor only at the pleasure of the two governments. As a matter of fact, Serbia in 1915 had notified Greece that she considered the treaty abrogated,¹ though she withheld public announcement of the fact throughout the war and during the period of Greek disaster in Asia Minor—a point of considerable importance, in the Serbian view, as showing that Serbia had scrupulously avoided embarrassing Greece or trying to exact favors from her under duress. Belgrade now publicly denounced the treaty; and though proclaiming its desire to make a new defensive alliance with Greece, the Yugoslav government let it be known that its price would include more satisfactory port ar-

¹ See statement of Foreign Minister Nintchitch, July 30, 1925, in the Athenian paper *Eleftheros Tipos*.

rangements in Saloniki and even the outright ownership of the Ghevgeli-Saloniki railway (so that it might be doubled-tracked), thus practically creating a "corridor" to the Ægean. Even recognizing that Athens is usually able to protect its interests when it comes to striking a bargain, and that Belgrade probably asked more than she expected, it is easy to see that these demands would sound in Greek ears dangerously similar to Bulgarian claims for a corridor to Kavala or Dedeagach. An outcry arose from Greece, in which were heard such words as "bully" and "hypocritical friend." Belgrade simply replied that if Jugoslavia were asked to be a guarantor of Greece's sovereignty over Greek Macedonia and Thrace, she was willing to assume the task, but if as a friend, would Greece show her friendship concretely in the Saloniki matter, and if as part of a business deal, her price was that same Saloniki readjustment.

After a strained interval, direct negotiations were resumed in the fall of 1925, and during the following winter conversations continued between technical representatives of the two countries regarding the best method of assuring free and efficient transit from Ghevgeli to Saloniki. They entered a new and hopeful stage with the advent of M. Rouphos at the Greek Foreign Office. It is not likely that Belgrade will press its former request for ownership of the rail-

way roadbed. The most promising solution seems for the creation of an international board of control for the railway, with Greek and Serb members, under a French or Swiss chairman. If a plan for the ownership and operation of the railway can be devised, the problem of the free zone itself should not prove difficult. And then the two countries would be ready for the revival of the defunct alliance.

There are several factors making settlement desirable in the eyes of both parties. Both realize the dispute is an obstacle to the negotiation of a "Balkan Pact" and wish to be rid of it. Yugoslavia is anxious to do as well as possible by her new Macedonian territories, and will be glad to accept any opportunity justifying her in assuring them that free and rapid access to blue water has really been secured. In general, too, though the Greek alliance has on some occasions proven a weak reed, Yugoslavia is anxious to have no uncertain gap on her southern flank in case of trouble with either Hungary or Italy. It would be particularly important to have the co-operation or neutrality of Greece in case Mussolini, feeling himself for some reason weak at home, chose to create a diversion in Albania. Yugoslavia's anxiety on this score may be presumed to have been in no degree lessened by reports that were in circulation in the Near East in 1925, that Great Britain had recruited

both Italy and Greece as partners in any warlike eventualities over Mosul, and that Greece, in addition to being promised concessions by Italy in Turkish Thrace and by Britain in Cyprus, had been encouraged by Italy to resist Jugoslav and Bulgarian pretensions on the Ægean coast. (Hence, perhaps, Jugoslavia's resumption of diplomatic relations with Turkey, and the signature of a treaty of amity between Bulgaria and Turkey, ratification of which was voted by the Sobranje on May 27, 1926.)

Similarly, Greece may be counted on as wishing a renewal of the Græco-Jugoslav alliance, and as being willing to make some sacrifices to bring it about. She would at the same time be pleasing the Rumanian government which has a commercial interest in Saloniki as a port of export. In fact, the Athenian press reported during the last week of June, 1926, that Bucharest had made a *démarche* suggesting that every effort be made to meet the Jugoslav point of view.

The Saloniki-Alexandria route, being the shortest, seems destined to be favored by commerce from central Europe to the Far East, and should eventually be able to attract much of the trade that formerly passed through Fiume or Constantinople. Greece's desire to keep firm hold of the port and to control its shipping is therefore quite understandable. General

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Pangalos, at any rate, was not of two minds in the matter, as was shown when he told Saloniki journalists during his visit in December, 1925, that his first action as Minister of War had been to send staff officers to the city to prepare plans for its fortification at a cost of a billion drachmæ. "I regard Saloniki," said the Prime Minister, "as the national acropolis of the future, and its existence is bound up with the existence of Greece as a nation." But however self-reliant the Greek government may feel, it will hardly make the mistake of adopting a course liable permanently to antagonize the Slavic hinterland on which Saloniki must mainly depend. The position of Greece along the northern coast of the Ægean is uncomfortable in any case. It would be precarious in the extreme should she antagonize both Jugoslavia and Bulgaria, and should those two countries unite forces against her.

CHAPTER VIII

BULGARIA AND THE ÆGEAN

JUST as Yugoslavia presses for a trade outlet southward through Saloniki, so Bulgaria frets at the thin Greek coastal strip—in one place only ten miles wide—that shuts her off from the Ægean and relegates her commerce to the roundabout Black Sea route or the slow passage up the Danube. The Principal Allied Powers, speaking in the Treaty of Neuilly, promised Bulgaria that in view of their decision to turn the northern Ægean seaboard over to Greece they would arrange suitable facilities for the transit of Bulgarian commerce. But the facilities which they subsequently offered were refused as “psychologically inadmissible” by Bulgaria, who apparently hoped, or thought it worth while to pretend she hoped, that the original undertaking implied something very much like Bulgarian sovereignty over a corridor to the Ægean; Bulgaria’s counter-propositions, all of them in this tenor, were rejected absolutely by the Allies; and there, for official purposes, the matter rested. But though no formal

negotiations are admitted to be in progress as this is written, the question is continually under discussion in the Bulgarian press and will one day have to be settled. Incidentally, Greece may be presumed to desire a settlement because uncordial relations with Bulgaria might prove disastrous were she to become involved in serious trouble with a third party—say with Jugoslavia over Saloniki, with Italy over the Dodecanese, or with Turkey over any one of a hundred possible bones of contention.

Bulgarian aspirations for an outlet on the Ægean received their first impetus from Russia in 1878, at the time of the Treaty of San Stefano. In 1876 the “Bulgarian atrocities” had aroused Europe. In the following year Russia declared war and succeeded in routing the Turks and threatening Constantinople. Her rapid success changed European sentiment overnight. British feeling ran so high that, despite Gladstone’s opposition, a fleet was dispatched to the Straits to show that a Russian seizure of Constantinople would not be tolerated. Russia made peace, but decided to strengthen Bulgaria as much as possible, perhaps with a view to future operations against the Turks. By the Treaty of San Stefano she proposed to create a Greater Bulgaria, to include most of Macedonia and part of the northern Ægean coast. Britain and Austria hastened to reject an

arrangement which so greatly increased Russian influence in the Balkans, and at the Congress of Berlin, convoked later in the same year, the Treaty of San Stefano was set aside. Turkey was handed back the bulk of her lost territory, including the Ægean littoral, and Austria was given the mandate to occupy the coveted provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. But although the San Stefano arrangement was so swiftly blotted out it was not forgotten in Bulgaria, and the Ægean coast was one of her chief objectives when she joined with the other Balkan states in 1912 in the war against Turkey. Though the First Balkan War gave her much of the desired coast line, the Second Balkan War deprived her of part of it. She lost the port of Kavala and the surrounding region, but retained the stretch between, roughly, the Mesta and Maritza Rivers, including the two ports of Dedeagach and Kara Agach.

It was to recoup the losses suffered as a result of her unwise provocation of the Second Balkan War that Bulgaria in 1915 decided to gamble again. That her ambitions were far from modest was demonstrated by her reply on September 26, 1917, to the Pope's inquiry regarding her peace aims, as well as by the earlier negotiations in which Tsar Ferdinand and his Cabinet took part before they finally chose the side of the Central Empires.

Premier Venizelos stated in a memorandum to the Peace Conference that in 1915 Greece, Serbia, and Rumania had offered Bulgaria, as the price of her aid in the war, the part of the Dobrudja which she had lost to Rumania in 1913, Thrace to the Sea of Marmora, Kavala, and Serbian Macedonia westward to the Albanian frontier; Bulgaria, he said, had scornfully refused, asking in addition a slice of southern Serbia and a part of Albania, so that her territories should extend from the Black Sea to the Ægean. It was for such great stakes that Bulgaria played and lost, and, losing, lost also the stretch of Ægean coast that for a time had been hers.

The statistics are so unreliable that it is hardly possible to say whether there is a Greek or Bulgarian majority in Western Thrace as a whole, though it seems to be accepted that the Greeks have the better of it in the coastal strip because of the predominantly Greek character of the sea towns.¹ (It should be

¹ In Western Thrace, the Bulgarian census of December, 1914, showed: Bulgars, 185,524; Turks, 210,336; Greeks, 32,377; miscellaneous, 6,289; total, 434,526. This census further divided the Bulgars into Christians, 115,509, Pomaks, 70,015.

At the Peace Conference in 1919 very contradictory Bulgarian and Greek estimates were presented. The Bulgarian estimate showed: Bulgars, 235,950; Turks, 197,863; total, 433,813. It was not admitted that any Greeks were left in the region. The total population is about the same as the 1914 total, but the estimate of Bulgars has been increased at the expense of Turks and Greeks. At the same time M. Venizelos presented an estimate as follows: Bulgars, 59,418; Turks, 285,083; Greeks, 70,558; total, 415,059. He probably counted the Pomaks as Turks, just as the Bulgarians probably counted the Greek-speaking Mohammedans as Turks.

H. W. V. Temperley seems to have no doubt about the transfer of

noted that, as between Greeks and Bulgars, the Turkish section of the population—which really includes many Pomaks, or Mohammedan Bulgarians—would naturally prefer the latter as rulers.) The frontier finally established followed the watershed of the Rhodope Mountains. There seems no doubt, however, that beyond all other arguments the Allies were influenced by the desire to diminish the strategic importance of a state that had cost them so dear by cutting off Russia from her western allies, by bringing Germany to Constantinople, and by all but destroying Serbia by attacking her armies on a new front.

The disaster of the Greek armies in Asia Minor was the signal for Bulgaria to begin agitation for the fulfillment of the promise contained in the Treaty of Neuilly (November 27, 1919; Art. 48): "The Principal Allied and Associated Powers undertake to insure the economic outlets of Bulgaria to the Ægean Sea. The conditions of this guaranty will be fixed at a later date." At the beginning, Bulgaria's former Thracian territory had remained under the joint

Western Thrace to Greece, even on ethnic grounds. Commenting in *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris* (Vol. IV, p. 456), he writes: "Nor was any violation of ethnic principles involved. The population of Western Thrace contains no Bulgarian majority, either relative or absolute; the absolute majority, indeed, is held only by Moslems as against Christians. The ethnic factor therefore could fairly be ignored and the future of the territory decided on grounds of higher policy."

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military occupation of the Principal Allied Powers. This had come to an end on August 10, 1920, when they allotted the zone to Greece by the so-called Thracian Treaty, which, though unratified, entered into effect in that the Allied troops withdrew and left the Greeks in possession. The Thracian Treaty specified that Bulgaria should have free transit over



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the territories and through the ports involved, with a permanent lease of the port of Dedeagach, and that an international commission should be charged with the duty of insuring her enjoyment of these rights.

Now three years later, in view of the changed conditions resulting from the overturn of the Treaty of Sèvres, Bulgaria was invited to come to Lausanne

to put forward her case in the Thracian matter. Premier Stambulsky, appearing in person, stated that it was essential that the Principal Allied Powers retain ownership of the territory in question, that they neutralize it and allow Bulgaria special facilities for building her own railways and a port at Dedeagach, or near by at Makri. He reasoned that his government would in any case find difficulty in securing capital for this work, and that if Thrace were to be under Greek sovereignty the outlook would be hopeless. A proposition that Dedeagach be equipped as a "free port" and that it and the railway be administered by a joint British, French, Italian, Bulgarian, Greek, Rumanian, Yugoslav, and Turk commission was refused by the Bulgarian delegation in a statement which plainly indicated their real objective: "It is only by direct possession of the territory in the neighborhood of the railway and port, or by placing that territory under a completely autonomous régime, economically tied to Bulgaria by special stipulations, that the port of Dedeagach can be constructed, controlled, and developed in accordance with the economic interests of Bulgaria." In subsequent discussions M. Venizelos said that if the arrangement in Dedeagach proposed by the Allies were unacceptable to Bulgaria, he would be glad to set apart a Bulgarian zone in Saloniki similar to that being arranged there

for Yugoslav commerce. Replying, M. Stancioff said that one proposition was as unsatisfactory as the other, and ended the matter, so far as the Lausanne Conference was concerned, by adding that he did not wish to pursue the discussion further.

A word about the ports themselves. Dedeagach, a town of about four thousand inhabitants, is the only Ægean seaport east of Saloniki having a direct railway connection. The railway runs down to the water's edge, and there is a small railway pier. But in its present state the port would be useless to Bulgaria even if it were opened to her commerce freely, as there is no protected harbor, the water inshore is shallow, and cargoes must be landed by lighters from vessels anchored over half a mile out. Kavala, further west, likewise has nothing but an exposed roadstead, and in its present state is not really a port at all. It still has to rely on motor transport for reaching the railway at Drama, some fifteen miles to the north. Between Kavala and Dedeagach, on the edge of the rich tobacco-growing plain of Xanthi, lies Kara Agach, known also as Porto Logos, possessing the only sheltered port on all this coast. The district is marshy and unhealthy, and the town has no railway connection, but it had been chosen by Bulgaria before the outbreak of the Great War for development as a center of Bulgarian export trade.

All three ports would need dredging, Dedeagach or Kavala would need the construction of elaborate breakwaters and moles, and Kavala and Kara Agach would require railway connections. It is quite understandable that Bulgaria does not wish to undertake the financing of any of these operations unless she is sure of profiting permanently. The question as to whether she overplayed her hand at Lausanne need no longer be argued. The Allies felt that they had showed her great consideration, and refused to put pressure on Greece to make further concessions. But the matter cannot be viewed solely from the legalistic standpoint. Geography continues to direct Bulgaria's eyes southward to the new ports of Greece, and one of them must sooner or later be adapted to her needs, in the common interest of the two countries.

Since the Allied Powers claim that they did their best at Lausanne to fulfill their obligations under the Treaty of Neuilly, and failed because of Bulgaria's own attitude, the solution of the difficulty can now be reached only by direct negotiation between the two countries concerned. On October 19, 1925, the "Greek Free Zone" was inaugurated at Saloniki for the purpose of giving "the Balkan states, and especially Bulgaria, access to the Ægean Sea, under regulations which will allow any country to use the

port for the shipment of goods, incoming or outgoing, without restriction as to duties, right of seizure, or right of search." Though Jugoslavia has found that such promises often read better on paper than they prove in practice, and though the facilities offered will hardly satisfy Bulgaria, who once already has rejected such an arrangement as inadequate, Greece probably made the move with a sincere desire of appeasing Bulgarian opinion. She remembers, perhaps, how unpleasantly close Jugoslavia and Bulgaria came to achieving co-operation against her in 1922 when Stambulisky, *en route* to Lausanne, stopped off at Belgrade and had long talks with the King and with MM. Pashitch and Nintchitch.

Unfortunately, on the very day that the "Greek Free Zone" was inaugurated occurred the Demi Hissar frontier incident, which for a moment threatened to bring the two countries to war. Relations were strained for some time, and it still remains to be seen whether Bulgaria will attempt to make any use of the new arrangement at Saloniki. A necessary preliminary would be the connection of the Greek and Bulgarian railway systems. The easiest way of doing this would be to prolong the Bulgarian line which now ends at Petritch, just short of the Greek frontier, to join the Saloniki-Dedeagach railway at

Demi Hissar. Reports from Athens ¹ have indicated that the Greek government favors this step, though in some quarters it is being urged that a better alternative would be for Bulgaria to complete a long-projected line southward through the mountains from Karadjin, to be joined by a Greek line pushed northward from Gumuldjina. The construction of either railway link would be an excellent preliminary to the adaptation of one of the Ægean ports to Bulgarian needs—in the former case Kavala or Kara Agach, in the latter case Kara Agach or Dedeagach.

At any rate, the suggestion indicates a satisfactory tendency at Athens to settle the whole question by direct negotiation with Sofia. The result will be awaited with anxiety by those who look forward to the day when, the table having been cleared of these individual questions, it will be possible for statesmen to turn their attention to general problems of Balkan peace.

¹ See *La Bulgarie* (Sofia), February 2, 1926, and *Eleftheron Vima* (Athens), February 7, 1926.

CHAPTER IX

THE DISPUTE OVER BESSARABIA

BESSARABIA, the wedge-shaped region sloping down to the Black Sea between the rivers Dniester and Pruth, has from time immemorial been a gateway between east and west. It has known every variety and version of the border province's inevitable tale of conquest and reconquest. Trajan's occupation of Dacia in the second century did not extend so far as Bessarabia, although Rome's influence was felt along all the coasts of the Black Sea. But from the second century until the thirteenth, successive waves of Goths, Huns, Slavs, Lombards, Avars, Bulgars, Magyars, and Tartars swept westward across the unhappy country. In the fourteenth century, Rumanian settlers began coming in from the west and northwest, and the Moldavian ruler, Stephen the Great, incorporated in his domains practically everything lying between the two rivers. After Stephen's death in 1504 Suleiman the Magnificent added the southern part to his empire, and during the succeeding two centuries the region was often the battle-ground of Rus-

sia and Turkey. In the course of the six-year war which broke out between the two countries in 1806 the Russian armies occupied most of Moldavia, which still was under the suzerainty of the Sultan; and by the treaty which Alexander I concluded with Turkey on May 28, 1812, Moldavia was divided into two parts, the eastern part—Bessarabia—passing to Russia.

It is this last event which is usually taken as the starting point in the arguments carried on so acrimoniously since the end of the Great War by Soviet Russia, claimant of the heritage of the Tsars, and the New Rumania, rightful legatee—she asserts—of the Moldavian Voivodes.

The dispute has done more than prevent the restoration of friendly relations between the two neighbor states. By refusing to consent to Rumania's annexation of Bessarabia the Bolsheviks have been able to strengthen their position as defenders of the national integrity of Russia, an opportunity which they have not neglected to cultivate. Further, Rumania's two partners in the Little Entente—Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, both of them Slavic—have not felt like identifying themselves with an openly anti-Russian policy. This has cast more than the suspicion of a cloud over the three-cornered entente created to oppose a Hapsburg restoration in Hungary.

In addition, then, to the obvious dangers from the general European point of view of having the Bessarabian question continually in discussion between Bucharest and Moscow, there are special disadvantages which Rumania (bordered, be it noted, by five Slavic states) has not been slow to recognize and which have made her extremely anxious that the Powers should lend the full weight of their combined influence toward bringing about a final settlement.

When Russia annexed Bessarabia in 1812 she at first allowed the inhabitants to retain much of their local administration and many of their local laws and customs. Bessarabia was definitely cut off, however, from close contact with the main part of Moldavia lying to the westward across the river Pruth; and in the southern part of the province, where the population was already extremely mixed, Russia took steps to encourage the immigration of compact groups of Russians, Bulgars, and Germans in order to aid the economic development of the country and possibly also to bring about its denationalization.

After the Crimean War a new frontier was drawn between Russia and Moldavia, the Powers forcing from Russia the cession of the southwestern districts of Bessarabia, less with the aim of favoring Moldavia than of pushing the empire of the Tsars back from the Danube. This readjustment lasted only twenty-

two years. (During this period, in 1861, the union of Moldavia and Walachia in the Rumanian state was recognized by the Powers.) When Russia declared war on Turkey in 1877 Rumania did not oppose the transit of Russian troops across her territory and in return received a promise that the "integrity" of Rumania would be respected at the end of the war. But Russia seems not to have considered that this promise included Rumania's possessions in southern Bessarabia, and although Rumanian troops had assisted considerably toward the success of Russian arms, Rumania found her delegates ruled out of the Congress of Berlin. This was an indication of what was in store for her. Although she was given the province of the Dobrudja by way of compensation, she was definitely deprived of southern Bessarabia.

For the next twenty-five years all Bessarabia remained a province of Russia. The peasantry, mainly Rumanian, were almost wholly illiterate. Such of the middle class as were of Rumanian blood gradually became more or less Russified, and many of the great Boyar families, as a result of their official connections with St. Petersburg, became partisans of the Russian régime. Historians have pointed out that it was probably only the Tsarist government's chronic dislike of popular education that saved the Rumanian peasantry from compulsory Russification. According

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to the Russian census of 1897, the province then had a population of about 2,000,000. Of them, Ru-



manians numbered 47.6 per cent; Russians and Ukrainians (Little Russians and Ruthenians) 27.8

per cent; Jews 11.8 per cent; Bulgars 5.3 per cent; Germans 3.1 per cent; and Turks 2.9 per cent. Rumanians usually claim that their co-nationals in Bessarabia number as high as 70 per cent of the population. Probably the actual figure lies between the Russian and Rumanian estimates.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 introduced a new era in Bessarabia. Rumanian—or, as it was at first called, Moldavian—propaganda began to be carried on openly, nationalist organizations were formed, and a few newspapers were published in the Rumanian language. But as the vast majority of the Rumanian Bessarabians were peasants, and as the city populations were mainly Jewish and Russian, the agitation was not very effective.

The outbreak of the Great War produced in Rumania a wide divergence of opinion as to the most advantageous course for the country to follow. The Allies and the Central Powers alike offered Rumania territories which were not theirs, but which they hoped to control as a result of victory. Austria-Hungary promised Bessarabia to Rumania if she would stick by the Triple Alliance, to which she had been a party for thirty years; the Allies, urging Rumania to make common cause with them, talked generously of Transylvania, the Banat, and Bukovina. The powerful faction of Rumanians who desired

above all to free Bessarabia from Russian control and restore its Moldavian population to their former union with the Moldavians of Rumania, believed that the Bucharest government should promptly cast in its lot with the opponents of Russia and prepare to reap the proffered benefits. Against these partisans of Austria-Hungary were concentrated many of the Rumanian intelligentsia, who believed in general in the likelihood of an Allied victory and who thought it poor policy to forego so promising a chance of securing the freedom of the large Rumanian populations under Hapsburg rule.

When on October 27, 1916, Rumania finally decided to declare war on Austria-Hungary, she became indirectly the ally of Russia. Rumanian arms did not, however, meet with much success, and a large part of the country was occupied by the troops of Field-Marshal Mackensen. In March, 1917, occurred the Russian Revolution. In that same month the central committee of a Moldavian National Party was formed at Kishinev to work for Bessarabian autonomy. No demand was voiced—openly, at any rate—for union with Rumania. The prospect of co-operation in a Russian federative republic, which seems to have been widely entertained at first, was dispelled by the declaration of the Ukraine in August that she considered Bessarabia to be included in her

territory. Activity for autonomy turned into activity for independence. The disorganization resulting in all parts of Russia from the advent of the Bolsheviks to power was heightened in Bessarabia by the refusal of the new rulers at Moscow to recognize the National Committee as representative of Bessarabian proletarian opinion. In October, 1917, the military committee of Kishinev summoned a congress representative mainly of Bessarabian military units, totaling, it was claimed, 300,000 men; 989 delegates assembled on October 20, and forthwith, following the example set in other border territories of Russia, proclaimed Bessarabian autonomy. A Supreme Council—the “Sfatul Tzareî”—was organized, 70 per cent of the 120 members being Moldavians, 30 per cent representatives of other nationalities. This “Sfatul Tzareî,” of rather irregular and uncertain origin, seems to have been composed not only of delegates of the different soldiers’ committees, but also of representatives of the Provincial Council of Peasants, together with a few professors and other intellectuals.

On March 27, 1918, the “Sfatul Tzareî” voted Bessarabia’s union with Rumania. The action was taken on certain specified conditions, *viz.*, the retention of provincial autonomy, provision for the rights of national minorities, and the continuation of the life of the assembly until such time as it should have

elaborated a system of agrarian reform. The action was voted 86 to 3, with 36 abstentions—in other words, practically according to national lines. Some of those abstaining desired a plebiscite, some a looser federative union with Rumania, some to remain in federation with Russia. In the fall of 1918 a statute for agrarian reform was adopted by the Rumanian Parliament, all properties of over 100 acres being expropriated for division among the workers; forests went to the state. In view of the formal adoption of this reform, and in view of the inclusion in Rumania of Bukovina, Transylvania, and part of the Banat (thereby reducing the preponderance of “Old” Rumania in Rumanian national affairs), the “Sfatul Tzareî” decided on November 26 to make the union with Rumania unconditional. Only a third of the members were present when this action was taken. The next day the assembly was permanently dissolved.

While these confused events were taking place in Bessarabia, the fortunes of Rumania were in the balance. At the time of Kerensky’s fall the Allied front from Bukovina to the Black Sea was held by 300,000 or 400,000 Russians and some 150,000 Rumanians. When the Bolsheviks signed their armistice with the Central Powers, Rumania had to adhere to the armistice also. The Russian forces

scattered, and the Rumanian armies at the front were reduced to about 100,000 by the dispatch of several divisions to Bessarabia. Rumania had no choice but to accept the terms of peace laid down by the Central Powers, and in the treaty signed at Bucharest on May 6, 1918, she relinquished the southern part of the Dobrudja to Bulgaria, certain important Carpathian passes to Austria-Hungary, and the northern part of the Dobrudja to her ex-enemies jointly, this latter provision cutting her off entirely from the Black Sea and establishing German and Austro-Hungarian control over the pipe lines leading from the Rumanian oil fields to Constanza. (The Central Powers expressed no objection to Rumania's taking Bessarabia in compensation.) From this fate Rumania was only saved by the subsequent victory of the Allies.

In March, 1920, the Supreme Council, sitting in Paris, sent word to Bucharest that it was prepared to recognize the union of Bessarabia with Rumania.¹ This willingness to comply with Rumanian desires had probably not been lessened by the fall of Premier Bratianu, with whom several Allied statesmen had had personal difficulties, by Premier Vaïda-Voïvod's acceptance of the Minorities Treaty, and by the with-

¹ The commission charged with studying Yugoslav and Rumanian affairs appears to have reported to the Supreme Council as early as April 6, 1919, in favor of the incorporation of Bessarabia in Rumania.

drawal of Rumanian troops from Hungarian soil. The essential paragraph in the note of the Supreme Council read as follows:

After taking into full consideration the general aspirations of the populations of Bessarabia and the Moldavian character of that region from the geographical and ethnographical points of view, as well as the historic and economic arguments, the principal Allied Powers pronounce themselves, therefore, in favor of the reunion of Bessarabia with Rumania which has now been formally declared by the Bessarabian representatives, and are desirous to conclude a treaty in recognition of this as soon as the conditions stated have been carried out. They consider that in this reunion the general and particular interests of Bessarabia should be safeguarded, more especially as regards its relations with the neighboring countries, and that the rights of minorities in it should be guaranteed on the same terms as those residing in other parts of the Rumanian Kingdom. The principal Allied Powers reserve the right to refer any future difficulties that might arise from either of these two questions to the arbitration of the League of Nations.

The signature of the formal treaty foreshadowed in this note took place at Paris on October 28, 1920, in the face of angry comments from the Soviets, who gave warning that as they had not been consulted they would recognize none of the provisions. The protest had this much in its favor, that when the Baltic states seceded from Russia the Allies withheld

recognition until the Soviet government itself had given approval. But the invocation of legalistic arguments, based on the Treaty of Bucharest of 1812 and the Treaty of Berlin of 1878, came with poor effect from a government which at Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918, had violated Russia's solemn engagement not to make a separate peace and had pushed Rumania two days later into signing the sad armistice of Buftea.

Moscow renewed her protest in threatening terms when France, following the lead of Great Britain, who had already acted, undertook to complete the ratification of the Treaty of Paris. On hearing of the favorable vote in the French Chamber of Deputies, Commissar Chicerin telegraphed M. Poincaré as follows (March 14, 1920):

The Government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics directs the attention of the French Government to the fact that the latter has identified itself with a violation of the rights of the population of Bessarabia and of the Soviet Union in the occupation of Bessarabia by Rumania, and it is therefore responsible for the losses caused the Soviet Union by this occupation. The Government of the U. S. S. R. will draw from this all necessary conclusions.

To which M. Poincaré replied:

The French Parliament could only be guided by the same motives which guided the British Parliament in ratify-

ing the treaty referred to on April 14, 1922, at which time this action was not considered an obstruction to the establishment of good relations between Great Britain and Russia. . . . In any case, Article 9 of the treaty provides that Russia should be invited to affix its signature. Thus the situation in relation to Russia may be regulated in the same way as was the case with the newly created independent states on her western frontier, in accordance with the principle of the self-determination of peoples, Russia always being the first to declare its adherence to this principle.

Meanwhile Italy and Japan took no steps toward ratifying the treaty which their delegates had joined in drawing up. Both, indeed, were busy with their own negotiations with Soviet Russia—Italy, in particular, with the protracted and confused *pourparlers* which finally resulted in the treaty and customs convention of March 7, 1924—and probably had no idea of jeopardizing their success for the sake of pleasing Rumania. To confirm them in this resolve must have been the object of a pamphlet—amounting to something between a warning and a threat—which M. Rakovsky issued in Paris in 1925. The Soviet ambassador in Paris, in whose veins runs Rumanian as well as Bulgarian blood, went so far in this pamphlet as to cite as possible reprisals open to Soviet Russia the negotiation of a treaty with Greece or Turkey recognizing the rights of one of those states

to the Dodecanese Islands, held by Italy, or a treaty with China confirming her rights to Wei-Hai-Wei. "The Italian and Japanese governments," he wrote, "must study this question seriously and face the consequences that ratification would have on our future relations. Let them realize that something more than a mere formality is in question." And he concluded: "Italy and Japan are in a dilemma: either to refuse ratification to the treaty, and so force Rumania to solve the Bessarabian problem in agreement with the Soviet government, in this way consolidating the peace on the border of eastern Europe; or to ratify this impossible treaty, thus worsening a situation which the illegalities of the treaty have already made quite sufficiently complicated."

Whether because Italy and Japan showed little inclination to fall in line with Rumanian wishes by adding their formal ratification to the instrument recognizing the annexation of Bessarabia, or whether because Burcharest agreed with M. Rakovsky that "the Bessarabian question will never be solved at Tokio or Rome, but at Moscow," several attempts have been made by the Rumanian government to come to an understanding with the Soviets by direct negotiation. For example, a conference was arranged between representatives of the two governments in Vienna in the spring of 1924 under the chairmanship

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of Dr. Grünberger, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs. But it broke up, before it had really begun, when M. Krestinsky, the principal Soviet delegate, declared that unless Rumania would agree to a plebiscite in Bessarabia other points at issue between the two countries could not even be taken under consideration. Rumania continued steadily to refuse a plebiscite, pointing out that in the province's present state of economic depression, due to the war and the ensuing political disorganization, many might be found voting "ag'in' the government" not because they actually preferred Russia to Rumania but as a protest against the difficulties of their situation.

Moscow's reply to the Rumanian refusal to continue the Vienna Conference on the basis of a plebiscite was the creation of an autonomous Moldavian Socialist Soviet Republic just across the Dniester from Bessarabia. The example had already been set by the string of borderland republics that had been built up, from the Finnish Autonomous Republic of Karelia, adjoining Finland, around the periphery of the Soviet domain as far as the Mongol-Buriat Autonomous Republic, adjoining Outer Mongolia, all of them designed to exert an attraction on the neighboring bourgeois states at the same time that they lessened the likelihood of a recrudescence of separatist movements among the local populations. The

time had now come to fill in another link in the chain.

When M. Krestinsky at the Vienna Conference renounced the "historic" Tsarist rights over Bessarabia, he stressed the problem of nationality. A carefully prepared propaganda now sought to create the illusion of a mass movement of the local population in favor of the formation of a Moldavian Republic. Robert F. Kelley, of the Department of State, has given some interesting details regarding this campaign.¹ Numerous meetings of alleged Bessarabian refugees and emigrants were held throughout Russia, and a "Rumanian Usurpers Hands-Off-Bessarabia-Society" was formed. Radek, writing in the *Pravda*, April 25, 1924, said: "Our demand for a plebiscite in Bessarabia is the vanguard skirmish in the struggle with the policy of imperialism in the southeast." And again: "The struggle of oppressed nationalities plays a large rôle in the reconstruction of Europe on new principles." The hopes pinned on the revolutionary possibilities of intensified nationalism were plainly exposed in an interview with the chairman of the Moldavian Revolutionary Committee in the *Izvestia* of November 1, 1924, in which he said that Kishinev (Chisinau) must be chosen as the *permanent* capital of the new state "because the larger part of the Moldavian Republic lies on the

¹ *Foreign Affairs*, New York, September, 1924.

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further side of the Dniester." In this he echoed the thought revealed in the words of the Ukrainian Commissar for Education a month earlier (*Izvestia*, September 30, 1924): "There are fewer Moldavians with us than in Bessarabia; there are more than a million there, while we have less than 200,000. But we are giving our Moldavian peasantry autonomy and culture. We will give them books, hospitals, etc., things which the Moldavians living in Bessarabia do not know or see."

The actual proclamation of the Moldavian Soviet Republic was made by the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee on October 12, 1924. Its boundaries, shown on the accompanying map, indicate how it was meant to facilitate the penetration of Bessarabia by Soviet emissaries preaching the self-determination of peoples *à la Russe*. These are some of the extenuating facts to which the Rumanian government points when it is attacked for maintaining so stringent a guard along the Dniester and for the sweeping arrests which it has been frightened into making when Bolshevist outbreaks like that at Tartar Bunar have threatened to become contagious.

During the last twelve months the Soviet propaganda in Bessarabia seems rather to have relaxed. Perhaps the Moscow Government has begun to feel itself too weak to risk a victory any more than a

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defeat. At any rate, the situation apparently was already being viewed with more equanimity in Bucharest by the spring of 1925, for at that time M. Duca, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, assured



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the writer that the bait of a Moldavian Republic held up before the Bessarabian peasantry had left the latter quite cold, and he added: "In fact, the creation of the Moldavian Republic has done us a service by establishing the fact that even the Bolsheviks them-

selves admit that there are large numbers of our people still left outside our national borders."

The final success or failure of Moscow's efforts to stir up a profitable store of discontent in the former Russian province will depend on a number of factors, of which the economic situation prevailing there will probably prove the most important. The Bessarabian economy has given reason for complaint and unrest ever since the union with Rumania. Though naturally a rich country, which used to produce as much as two million tons of cereals per year, and which often was able to export nearly half that amount, Bessarabia has constantly had to import cereals since the war—mostly from "Old" Rumania, which, in turn, has been importing American wheat. Various causes for this state of affairs can be given, in addition to the obvious one that the closing of the Rumanian-Russian frontier shut off one of the main routes for Bessarabia's exports and imports and temporarily lowered its whole economic standard. First and foremost must be put the operation of the new land law forbidding any one person from owning more than 100 hectares of land. The termination of the old feudal system by breaking up the large estates is excellent in theory, and in time production will doubtless again reach approximately pre-war levels. But during these first years the former serfs, become

their own masters, have missed the supervision of the old Boyar landlords, and though the government promised to encourage co-operative societies both for financing and for marketing, it does not seem to have been as energetic in the matter as could be wished. As a result money rates have remained exorbitant, money-lenders in the towns being reported by a correspondent of the *London Times* in December, 1925, as demanding as high as thirty-six per cent interest from farmers who needed help in financing their planting.

It is only fair to say that all sections of Rumania have been struggling to meet continuously increasing costs of living, aggravated by the Bratianu Government's policy of money deflation and an unfortunate series of bad crops; but to this must in turn be added the statement that the Rumanian civil administration, nowhere noted for especial efficiency, has fallen further short of proper standards in Bessarabia than anywhere else in the Rumanian realm. This is a pity because it is precisely in Bessarabia, exposed as it is to Bolshevik propaganda and to inroads such as the Tartar Bunar "rebellion" of September, 1924, that the New Rumania should have put its best foot forward. Evidence is not lacking that Bucharest now recognizes this, and recent observers in Bessarabia, while noting the general stagnation of trade, seem to

find merit in many undertakings of the present régime, in particular the successful fair organized last autumn at Kishinev and the plans for sadly needed railways and roads. The government is also trying, through the mixed "Dniester Commission," to arrange for the repatriation of the Russian refugees now living in Bessarabia.

Some of the other factors to be reckoned with in the Bessarabian situation have already been mentioned, among them Russia's efforts to attract within her orbit the border states of the Baltic and the Middle East, and the solidarity of Rumania's diplomatic and military ties with her Little Entente neighbors and with the different Allied Powers. Nor, in this connection, must one lose sight of the possibility that if the Soviets were to go to war for Bessarabia, which they still count as part of their domain, and if Poland were to spring to Rumania's assistance, as their alliance provides, Germany might find her aid invoked for the "defense" of Russian territorial integrity under the terms of the recent Russo-German treaty. But any such chain of events presupposes a general conflagration and the reshuffling of the whole European pack of cards. For immediate purposes, therefore, our chief indication in judging whether the present arrangement will continue—short of war—is to be found in the internal state of Bessarabia itself.

Until the Rumanian administration is able to give the economic life of the province a distinct turn for the better, agitators from over the border will always find favorable soil there for the sowing of communist tares. So long as this is true the Bessarabian question can not be said to be "settled," even in the limited sense in which we often must use the word when we speak of territorial arrangements in eastern Europe.

CHAPTER X

ORGANIZING FOR PEACE

I. THE LITTLE ENTENTE

RUMANIA, Jugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, all three legatees of part of the Hapsburg patrimony, found themselves in 1919 depending for the maintenance of their rights on their own uncorrelated efforts, on the uncertain action of their great allies, and on the fiat of the League of Nations, still in its infancy and without material means for enforcing its decisions. National sentiments had been profoundly stirred, and it would not have been strange had each of the Succession States struggled along its own separate path, making temporary arrangements to meet individual events and avoiding definite or continuing commitments toward the others.

This might have occurred had Hungary disciplined itself in accordance with Gambetta's excellent advice to his compatriots after the Franco-Prussian War, to think about Alsace-Lorraine always, but to speak of it never. Instead the Magyars of all ranks raised the in-

transigent slogan, "*Nem, nem, soba!*" ("No, no, never!"), and spoke on every possible occasion, in private and in public, of their determination to win back every inch of the territory formerly belonging to the sacred Crown of St. Stephen, regardless of the fact that of the twenty-one millions who before the war paid it tribute less than half were Magyars, and that, despite glaring injustices at various points, the boundaries of Hungary to-day inclose over two-thirds of the Magyar race, while of the lost three millions the majority live in scattered "islands" and could only be joined to the motherland by sacrificing to the rule of Budapest a larger number of other nationalities. By their indiscreet defiance, punctuated by the two attempts of Ex-Emperor Charles to regain the throne, they drove the new states into combination against them, and incidentally against Austria. It is one of the ironies of the situation that Hungary, which became the nemesis of the Dual Monarchy through its refusal to help solve the problem of the subject races, has continued its unhappy influence on Austrian destinies by preventing an early reconciliation with those same peoples, now independent.

The moral right of the new states to interfere as a holy alliance in the internal government of a neighboring nation is open to question, though clothed as they are in the peace treaty settlements they naturally

do not admit it. But, abstractions aside, the causes of their action are plain enough.

The landscape was dark in most parts of Europe during the winter of 1919-20. The precarious situation of the republican régime in Germany, the tension along the Russo-Rumanian frontier, Poland's isolation and her acute disagreements with Soviet Russia and Lithuania, d'Annunzio's raid on Fiume—these were in themselves enough to plunge the whole constellation of Succession States into perturbation and gloom. Then on March 1 came the election of Admiral Horthy as regent of Hungary, followed by White excesses which added fuel to the flames of Magyar nationalism. Dr. Benes, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, has already taken the lead in informal *pourparlers* as to how the position of the Danubian states might be strengthened and consolidated. In August, 1920, he arrived in Belgrade, and there on the 14th of the month signed with Foreign Minister Nintchitch a convention which was to be the prototype of the subsequent conventions between Czechoslovakia and Rumania and between Rumania and Jugoslavia. After a preamble setting forth that the signatories were "firmly resolved to maintain the Peace obtained by so many sacrifices, and provided for by the Covenant of the League of Nations, as well as the situation created by the

Treaty concluded at Trianon," the first three articles of the treaty laid down the means of co-operation for attaining this end:

I. In case of an unprovoked attack on the part of Hungary against one of the High Contracting Parties, the other Party agrees to assist in the defense of the Party attacked, in the manner laid down by the arrangement provided for in Article II of the present Convention.

II. The competent technical authorities of the Czechoslovak Republic and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes shall decide, by mutual agreement, upon the provisions necessary for the execution of the present Convention.

III. Neither of the High Contracting Parties shall conclude an alliance with a third Power without preliminary notice to the other.

It was further agreed that the Convention was to run for two years, that it should be ratified as promptly as possible, and that it should be registered with the League of Nations.

In Také Jonsescu, whom he then proceeded to visit in Bucharest, Dr. Benes found a convinced advocate of an energetic common policy for the Succession States. But at the moment Rumania was more occupied with Russia than with Hungary, and it was not until after Ex-Emperor Charles's first *Putsch*, in March, 1921, that she made up her mind to enter into the defensive alliance suggested by the Czech

statesman. The accord was finally signed on April 23, and a few weeks later M. Jonescu came to Belgrade and on June 7 put his name to an agreement with Yugoslavia completing the triangle. The last agreement differed from the other two in that it was directed not only toward Hungary, but also southward toward Bulgaria, then mutually feared on account of the activities of the Macedo-Bulgar *komitadji* bands. Parallel to these three defensive alliances creating the Little Entente were drawn up three military accords, providing for the constant interchange of information and for the employment of forces in an emergency.¹ The military unit thus created was an imposing one. Yugoslavia had at its disposal over 600,000 recently trained men, while Rumania and Czechoslovakia had over 400,000 each, making a joint force of about a million and a half men whom the Little Entente governments could summon into action to preserve the *status quo* of the peace treaties.

The ramifications of the Little Entente already extended to Poland. In view of strong opposition in the Slavic capitals of Prague and Belgrade to participation in any anti-Russian pact, Foreign Minister Jonescu had sought elsewhere for an alliance in case

¹ The military accords were dated as follows: Czechoslovakia and Rumania, July 2, 1921; Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, August 1, 1921; Yugoslavia and Rumania, January 23, 1922.

of trouble over Bessarabia, and had found it in Warsaw. In March he had signed with Prince Sapieha an agreement for joint military action in case of Soviet aggression.¹ In September of the same year Czechoslovakia and Poland signed a treaty of commerce, followed by a defensive treaty, though the latter, despite its very limited terms, remained unratified. As Yugoslavia had ties with Greece—though they were not particularly cordial at the moment—the affiliations of the Little Entente now extended from the Baltic to the Ægean, and many prophesied that it was destined to become the nucleus for a Danubian Confederation.

These prophets did not understand the *raison d'être* of the Little Entente, nor the divergencies of view existing between its component states despite their agreement to act in common in the face of one important danger. The Little Entente treaties differed essentially from the usual treaties of pre-war Europe in that they rigorously excluded commitments which were not of equal concern to all three parties. Dr. Benes during the recent conference at Bled described the treaties of the Triple Alliance as classic examples of "the immoral and unscientific system by which I take your responsibilities on my neck and in exchange you take mine on yours." How

¹ Renewed March 26, 1926.

unsatisfactory such a system could be to one's partners was seen by Austria-Hungary and Germany in 1914, when Italy decided that a *casus fœderis* had not been created in the sense understood in her treaties with them. Avoiding this method, the negotiators of the Little Entente underlined the questions that were the common concern of all three, and, though each promised to adopt a friendly attitude toward their partners' other problems, declined to assume responsibility for them. In this way Rumania's dispute with Russia over Bessarabia, Czechoslovakia's troubles with Germany and Poland, Jugoslavia's acrimonious incidents with Italy over Fiume and her differences with Greece, none of them came within the province of the tripartite pact and were never for an instant expected to. There thus could be no soreness regarding the refusal of the other two states to join in these quarrels, which were either "private" as distinct from "family" affairs, or else formed part of international complexes in which the Great Powers were concerned and which could in no case be solved on the separate initiative of the Little Entente.

The two moments when the Little Entente acted most vigorously and acquired its greatest prestige were when Ex-Emperor Charles made his second

attempt to regain his throne, in October, 1921, and during the Genoa Conference in 1922.

When Charles appeared at Sopron to win or lose all in a final throw, Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia promptly mobilized. The Great Allies were neither so positive nor so energetic. Whereas Dr. Benes announced that the presence of the former Emperor on Hungarian soil was a *casus belli*,¹ they claimed that Admiral Horthy was master of the situation and at first refused to support the Little Entente demands that the Hungarian nation forthwith depose not only Charles but the whole Hapsburg dynasty and pay a nominal sum toward the costs of Czechoslovak and Jugoslav mobilization. But when Dr. Benes pressed his view under threat of a military advance against Budapest, the Council of Ambassadors telegraphed the Horthy government from Paris advising the acceptance of the first of these demands, and on November 5 the Hungarian Parliament voted the dethronement of Charles and the suppression of the Hapsburg hereditary succession. This was strengthened a few days later to meet the full wishes of the Little Entente by a governmental declaration that a Hapsburg would never be proposed for election to the throne and that no candidate would be considered

¹ M. Miloyevitch, the Jugoslav Minister, said the same thing even more plainly at Budapest.

without previous negotiation with the Allied Powers. The Little Entente had won. Charles embarked on a British monitor, and died at Madeira the first day of the following April.

Their success in dealing with the former Emperor's rash act brought the partner states into closer contact than ever (Rumania in a less degree, perhaps, her position not having been so categorically maintained at Budapest), and preliminary to the important international conference opening at Genoa in April, 1922, it was decided to hold a meeting to arrange for the effective presentation of their joint views. This was indeed necessary, as Genoa was not merely to deal with Russia, a question from which the Little Entente as a unit held sternly aloof, but with certain aspects of European reconstruction in which they were vitally concerned. After preliminary meetings a final session was held at Belgrade, to which added importance attached because of the presence of Polish representatives. A common course of action was mapped out regarding the payment of reparations, the granting of credits, the simplification of customs and passport facilities, and the speeding up of international railway travel. It will be recalled that at Genoa M. Poincaré, acting through M. Barthou, successfully maintained the right of the Little Entente, augmented by Poland, to be con-

sidered as a single "Great Power" and hence to be represented on all the sub-commissions. M. Poincaré probably aimed at creating a counterweight to Italy, who usually combined with Great Britain to outvote France in Inter-Allied councils. In his first address before the Chamber of Deputies after he became Premier in 1922 M. Poincaré had said emphatically that "the Little Entente is a real element for peace in Europe"; and the Minister of one of the Little Entente states who called on him to thank him said afterward that M. Poincaré's further comment had been: "The only fault I find with the Little Entente is its name, which recalls the invidious discrimination made at the Peace Conference between the smaller states and the larger." But whatever the objectives of M. Poincaré, one result of his action certainly was the enlargement of the Little Entente's prestige and solidarity. The guaranty that their view would be continually heard and taken into account proved a valuable practical as well as moral success for Prague, Warsaw, Belgrade, and Bucharest.

Of subsequent Little Entente conferences the ones at Prague in August, 1922, and at Sinaia the following July were the most important. The successful repulse of the Karlist intrigue and Austria's pledge to Czechoslovakia at the end of 1921 to respect the Treaties of St. Germain and the Trianon brought a

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gradual lessening of tension throughout the Danubian area. The better spirit showed itself at the Prague conference, which decided not to oppose the entry of Hungary into the League of Nations and to forward in every way possible the League plans for the economic reconstruction of Austria. The policy of moderation was carried further by the agreement at Sinaia the next summer to support a project for Hungarian reconstruction similar to that which was proving so successful in Austria, in the hope that better times might make the Magyars more inclined to accept their new lot. At the most recent conference, held in the Slovenian village of Bled between June 17 and 19, 1926, MM. Benes, Nintchitch and Mitilineu exchanged ratifications of the agreement extending the Little Entente for another three years.

II. AN ECONOMIC CONFEDERATION

Is the Little Entente likely to change its character or objectives during this new lease of life?

In the first place it should be noted that the efforts made by Dr. Benes to extend its scope to the economic field have failed and no longer are being pressed. The Little Entente's excursion into the economic realm at Genoa was in pursuit of specific ends. Its favorable attitude toward Austrian and Hungarian re-

construction was passive rather than active—the three member states merely agreed that it was safe not to oppose the League's schemes. But elaborate constructive measures for the co-ordination of economic life in the Danube valley are of quite another order and have so far met with insurmountable difficulties.

The reason for this is not easily understood by American travelers who have been bothered by the interminable proceedings at many central European frontiers and who think the present system a monstrosity. They talk of "getting rid of the war fever," erroneously supposing that the nationalism of the new states is to be traced merely to the war. In fact, it had its well-spring much further back and had already attained such proportions under the discriminatory pre-war régime that, as R. W. Seton-Watson points out in his latest work, the discontent of the Hapsburg peoples takes rank with Franco-German, Anglo-German, and Austro-Russian rivalry as one of the fundamental causes of the conflict. Time will doubtless bring about a reconciliation between the masters of yesterday and those who work for them no longer. But barriers will not fall because they are immoral, but because they are manifestly inexpedient, and because as the past retreats into the distance expediency can gradually attain the ascendancy over sentiment and the memory of

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wrongs committed. Meanwhile it is quite true that the new states are not guided by enlightened self-interest. Few states, or indeed individuals, are. Fear, prejudice, greed, revenge, all sorts of un-economic passions play their part.

So Dr. Benes found when he began sounding the other Little Entente statesmen regarding something like a Danubian customs union. It is fair to point out that he was in a special position. Prague is the center of a highly industrialized region and as such can view a proposal to resume close economic relations with Vienna and Budapest with more equanimity than can Bucharest or Belgrade, both of them capitals of strongly agricultural countries striving hard to develop their infant industries—especially metallurgical and textile. Czechoslovakia feels she can safely venture to compete with the old centers, and considers that in any case she stands to gain more by a resumption of Danubian trade (of which she hopes to make Bratislava an important center) than she could lose by Austrian and Hungarian competition. Nor is she oblivious of the fact that—as with Austria and Hungary—a tariff union would bring her partial compensation for her exclusion from direct access to the sea, a factor which does not come into the reckoning of Yugoslavia or Rumania. Again, she is much more worried by the Austrian movement

for union with Germany than are her two partners, and is correspondingly more anxious to find a way of helping Austria live a healthy independent life. The other two would most emphatically dislike to see Germany press down the Danube and obtain a common frontier with Hungary, but they are not as directly threatened as Czechoslovakia, whose position if the *Anschluss* succeeded would become precarious in the extreme—an awkwardly shaped jetty pushed out into a German sea. Lastly, Dr. Benes was discouraged by the attitude of the other European states. He was urged from a variety of sources, British, French, Italian, Scandinavian, and so on, to “do something for Austria.” But when the spokesmen of those same countries found that in his eyes this meant for Czechoslovakia to exchange special privileges with Austria, and that they were not to profit except indirectly, they at once protested and demanded most favored nation treatment. Now whatever altruism may have prompted the Czech proposal with regard to Austria certainly did not extend, for example, to Sicily or Scotland, so here was another reason for dropping the scheme.

III. A BALKAN PACT

So much for the successful efforts of the Little Entente to keep the upper hand over Hungary, and

the unsuccessful efforts of Dr. Benes to develop that political and military instrument into a means of economic reconstruction. A third field of activity for the Little Entente is now being suggested. In addition to claiming for it the credit that war has not been resorted to either to break or keep the peace settlement in Central Europe, its admirers also allege that it has had a salutary effect on Balkan hotheads; they urge that the time is now come for it to transform itself into a league of East European peoples or at least for it to undertake the organization of a "Balkan Pact" of mutual defense and non-aggression. They exaggerate the influence of the Little Entente, as such, in purely Balkan matters, and forget that it has well-defined aims which are not yet fully attained. It may be accepted as certain that if a Balkan Pact ever materializes it will not take form around the Little Entente.

The Balkan Pact proposal will remain academic until the concrete problems raised in the foregoing chapters have been solved. The respective governments can undertake the task of solving them whenever they wish. But before a definite Pact becomes thinkable it will also be necessary for the peoples themselves to want it with all their hearts. Time and effort are necessary to bring them to the right state of mind. In more than one part of the Balkans

hereditary brigandage and patriotism go hand in hand, and the press of all the capitals is unbridled in its comment on the *komitadji* inroads and assassinations which are of frequent occurrence. The graver incidents of this sort inevitably become the subject of government action as well as of newspaper recrimination. But in the case of inter-racial village brawls and other minor incidents press and people must learn to restrain their human inclination to abuse their neighbors before the time can become ripe for definite steps toward the peaceful organization of the whole peninsula.

When the moment arrives for the Balkan nations to join together in a Pact of non-aggression, they should steer clear alike from assuming commitments outside the peninsula and from allowing foreign interference in their dealings with one another. Since the war, as before, one or other of the Great Powers has always stood ready to assume the prerogatives and responsibilities of Balkan patron. For a time France was the cultural and military model for the new states. She still stands first—sentimentally. But as a result of the added security given the Franco-German frontier by the Locarno agreements the interest she used to feel for the Eastern states as bulwarks of the peace settlements has lost its intensity. Further, Locarno has limited her freedom of action

and her financial difficulties have dimmed her prestige. Today the aspirant for her place is Italy. Whenever there has been talk of a Danubian customs union Italy has been at pains to write herself down as a Succession State and therefore entitled to a place in the proposed scheme of things. As she is not a Danubian power this has been taken as notice that she is merely waiting the convenient opportunity of making her weight felt.

Unfortunately, all the Balkan states are not of one mind in rejecting offers of foreign interference. The country least contented with its present lot is of course Bulgaria, who has paid heavily for her mistake in making common cause with the ancient enemies of Balkan freedom, the Turks, and Slavdom's rival in the Near East, Austria-Hungary. Denied many coveted districts in Macedonia, cut off from the Ægean, she is not in a frame of mind to join a pact consecrating the *status quo* and has frankly been looking abroad for help. Welcome excuses for rejecting a "Balkan Locarno" have been furnished Sofia by the Macedo-Bulgar leaders who flocked to the Bulgarian capital when their former haunts passed under Greek and Serbian rule. They have tormented the occasional Bulgarian statesmen who sincerely desired peace with the neighboring states; Stambulisky paid for his moderation with his life. They have made the

road easy for the other and more numerous category of Bulgarian statesmen, those who have hoped that by holding aloof and pleading the woes of their country abroad they might be spared from accepting the present territorial arrangement as final.¹ The danger of the situation lies not only in the possibility that sooner or later an inroad of Bulgarian *komitadji* into Serbian or Greek Macedonia may cause so much damage that the injured state will send a punitive expedition across the frontier to root out the trouble-makers, but also that the disagreements of the rival Bulgarian cliques supply opportunities aplenty to any foreign power that wishes to keep the Balkans harassed and disunited. For example, Italy might easily feel her hold on the Mediterranean threatened if Bulgaria joined Yugoslavia in a South Slav federation. A Balkan Pact would be a long step in that direction. Rome might therefore consider it logical to encourage Sofia not to settle the Macedonian question and not to enter a Balkan Pact, with the aim of preventing the formation of a Slav power stretching from the Julian Alps to the Black Sea.

It would be sad if the proposed Pact failed because an outside power stiffened the opposition of some Balkan protégé or itself insisted on participating; but

¹ Belgrade offered to negotiate a treaty of non-aggression and arbitration with Bulgaria in the spring of 1926; the suggestion was not accepted.

perhaps it had better fail for the time being than be forced forward under such circumstances. Count Andrassy, coming back from Berlin after securing the right to occupy Bosnia, said: "I bring the Emperor the keys to the Orient." They turned out to be the keys to Pandora's box, and not only Austria-Hungary and the Balkans but the world in general suffered as a result of prying it open. No outside power should again be allowed to secure the Balkan keys to the East. Moreover, as the maintenance of the *status quo* is the only possible foundation on which to build a Balkan Pact, there must be no temptation to resort continually to an outside arbiter to turn the balance one way or the other. What the Balkan states need is to stand together, promising nothing more than to refrain from aggression against each other and avoiding entanglements outside their special sphere. After being often used as tools for ends quite alien to their own interests, they may be forgiven a period of prudent selfishness under the hackneyed but neglected motto: "The Balkans for the Balkan peoples."



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